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NEW SERIES.

III.

3974.

THE ASSEMBLIES OF AL ḤARÎRI,

Translated from the Arabic,

WITH NOTES,

HISTORICAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

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BY

DR. F. STEINGASS,

Editor of the latest Arabic text of Ḥarîri's Assemblies, and Author of English, Arabic and Persian Dictionaries.

Prefaced and Indexed

BY

F. F. ARBUTHNOT, M.R.A.S.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC

VOL. II.

CONTAINING THE LAST TWENTY-FOUR ASSEMBLIES.

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THOMAS CHENERY, M.A.,

BORN 1826; DIED 1884.

We know not what happens to us spiritually after death, and can only repeat in the words of the Koran, "We belong to God, and unto Him we shall surely return." Still, if there be such a thing as continuation, should you (wherever you may be) happen to learn that your great work here has been completed and indexed, the fact will not, I trust, displease you.

Admiringly yours,

F. F. ARBUTHNOT.

PREFACE.

THE great work of Ḥarîri consists of fifty Makâmât, or Assemblies. Of these the late Mr. Thomas Chenery translated and published the first twenty-six, with copious and valuable notes, in 1867. He had fully intended to complete the translation of the remaining twenty-four, and also to prepare an Index to the two volumes. But called away to the editorship of the *Times* in 1877, his hopes and expectations were never fulfilled, and he died in 1884, leaving his task unfinished.

In 1891 the Oriental Translation Fund, which had existed from 1828 to 1878, was revived under the same name, but as a new series. Among the works that came under the consideration of the committee appointed by the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society, the translation and annotation of the remaining twenty-four Assemblies of Ḥarîri, proposed by Dr. F. Steingass, held an important place, and was accepted.

By the courtesy of the executors of the late Mr.

Chenery, two hundred and fifty unbound copies of his work were obtained and purchased, and during these negotiations, with zeal and ability Dr. F. Steingass translated the remaining twenty-four Assemblies, and explained them with important and valuable notes. To the above a complete descriptive index has been added, and these two volumes, bound with the covers of the Oriental Translation Fund New Series, form the issue for 1898 in continuation of the works which have been annually published by the Fund since 1891.

Mr. Chenery's introduction to the first volume (extending from pages 1 to 102) contains such a complete survey of the whole work that it is hardly necessary to add to it. But the contents of the second volume continue to show the wonderful subtleties, pliabilities, fertilities, boundless resources and extraordinary richness of the Arabic language. A careful perusal of the two volumes will fully bear out the generally-expressed opinion that, next to the Koran, the Assemblies of Ḥarîri are the most celebrated production of Arabic literature.

Throughout these Assemblies, as Chenery says in his notes at page 273, "Not only are verses of the Koran freely introduced, but the whole language is tinged with allusions to it, which are almost imperceptible to

the European, but which are readily caught by a Moslem who knows the sacred work by heart." In the same way there are many and constant allusions to Arab proverbs, which form a very valuable and instructive addition to the work. Every mention of them, and every allusion to the Koran, have been carefully noted in the index, and, though the references are numerous, it will enable the student or the enthusiast to go through the details of them without any difficulty. This also applies to other subjects, such as Traditions, Legends, Arab manners and customs, etc.

Dr. Steingass has completed his portion of the work under great physical difficulties. For some part of the time he was actually blind, and even after his recovery was obliged to be extremely cautious so as not to overstrain his eyesight. His Student's Edition of the Arabic text of the Assemblies of Ḥarîri was published by Sampson Low, Marston and Co. in 1897, while his translation of the last twenty-four Assemblies follows in 1898.

One word about the transliteration from the Arabic of the second volume, regarding which Dr. Steingass was much concerned. Since 1867 considerable progress has been made in this subject, and he was naturally anxious that the names of the people and the places as spelt by Mr. Chenery should be spelt in the

style now generally in use. Consequently there was some difference between the transliteration of Mr. Chenery and Dr. Steingass, and it was necessary to decide how this matter should be dealt with.

For the sake of uniformity, it seemed both advisable and desirable that the names of people, places and things should be spelt in the second volume as in the first, and I insisted, much against Dr. Steingass's wish, that this should be done. In this, then, the transliteration of the two volumes will be found to agree, and as regards the rest, Dr. Steingass has had a free hand. The difference between the spelling of the two translators will be found in Appendix B at the end of the second volume.

The Index to the whole work is rather long, but it was absolutely necessary to give a short description of the various people who appear upon the scene, so that it might be understood at a glance who and what they were. This has been curtailed as much as possible, but further information about them can be obtained from the following works, translated for the Oriental Translation Fund Old and New Series :

(1) Ibn Khallikán's Biographical Dictionary (O.S.).

(2) Hajji Khalfeh's Lexicon (O.S.).

(3) Mas'udi's Historical Encyclopædia (O.S.)

(4) Tabari's Chronicles (O.S.).

(5) Mirkhond's "Rauzat-us-safâ," or "Garden of Purity" (N.S.).

The following works will also be found useful for reference.

(6) Hughes' "Dictionary of Islâm" (W. H. Allen and Co., London, 1885).

(7) Sale, Rodwell, and Palmer's Translations of the Koran.

(8) Freytag's Translation of Arab Proverbs into Latin, in three volumes.

(9) Burton's "Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah" (Tylston and Edwards, London, 1893).

(10) "Arabic Authors" (William Heinemann, 1896).

Although thirty years have elapsed since Mr. Chenery published his valuable translation of the first twenty-six Assemblies of Ḥarîri, it is a matter of congratulation that the whole work has now been completed and indexed, and that it has been done into English and in England.

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THE ASSEMBLIES OF AL ḤARÎRI.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF THE TENT-DWELLERS."

In this Assembly, which Ḥarîri himself marks out as of some importance from a philological point of view by attaching to it a short commentary of his own, Al Ḥârith records another of his early reminiscences. In his youth he cherished a strong desire to mingle with Arabs of the desert, in order to make himself familiar with their manners and idioms. After having acquired, by strenuous exertion, a live-stock of camels and sheep, he settles amongst a Bedouin tribe of genuine descent, who willingly accord him their protection. One night a valuable milch camel went astray, and he sets out on horseback in search of her. During the night and the ensuing forenoon his efforts to find her are unavailing, and when mid-day grows high [approaches] with its oppressive heat, he feels compelled to seek shelter and rest under a shady tree. Scarcely has he done so, when he perceives a solitary wanderer nearing his resting-place. With mingled feelings of annoyance at the intrusion of a stranger, and of hope that he might hear through him news of his strayed camel, he awaits his coming. On his closer approach, however, he recognises in him Abû Zayd, whose welcome companionship makes him almost oblivious of his loss. In reply to his affectionate inquiries, Abû Zayd improvises some beautiful verses, in which he describes in racy language his Bohemian way of living, which renders him independent of favours that would have to be courted by self-abasement, more hateful to him than death itself. After having questioned on his part Al Ḥârith as to the reason of his presence in this lonely spot, and being told about the lost beast, and the hitherto fruitless search for her, he begs leave to take his

noon-day sleep, and is soon deeply drowned in it. Al Ḥârith tries to keep awake, but the lull in their conversation makes him succumb to his drowsiness, and when he rouses himself at night-fall he finds to his dismay that Abû Zayd is gone together with the horse. In sore distress he awaits the morning, when he sees a rider on a camel travelling in the desert, to whom he waves his garment, to attract his attention, but the signal remains unheeded, and he has to run after the man, intending to ask him for a lift, however grudgingly it might be granted. Having reached him, he perceives on closer scrutiny that the man is seated on the lost camel. He drags him down from her back, and a violent altercation takes place, in the midst of which Abû Zayd again appears on the scene, and his coming, after yesterday's experience, at first fills Al Ḥârith with misgivings as to his further intentions. Abû Zayd, however, at once sets his mind at rest, and addressing his antagonist in stern and threatening terms, soon puts him to flight. Then, guessing at the struggle between resentment and gratitude in Al Ḥârith's breast, he recites some pithy lines, in which he advises him to make the best of a losing bargain and to forbear both thanks and rebuke. So they separate as fairly good friends, and Al Ḥârith returns home, having recovered his camel, but lost his horse.

Al Ḥârith, son of Ḥammâm, related: In the prime of my life that has fleeted, I had a leaning towards intercourse with the people of the hair-tents, so that I might take after their high-mettled spirits and their Arab tongues. So I bestirred myself with the alertness of one not lacking in industry, and began to roam through low-lands and high-lands, until I had got together a string of those that groan [*i.e.*, camels], along with a flock of those that bleat [*i.e.*, sheep]. Then I betook myself to some Arabs, [fit to be] lieutenants of kings, sons of speech [saws]. They gave me a home with them in safest vicinity, and turned [blunted] from me the edge of any [hostile] tooth. No care alighted upon me while I was with them, no arrow struck [the smoothness] of my rock, until one night, bright with

full-moon-sheen, there strayed from me a she-camel profuse of milk-flow. Then my heart suffered me not to forbear the quest of her, and to throw her halter upon her hump [allowing her to wander at will]. So I sprang upon a swift-paced steed, planting a trembling lance between thigh and stirrup, and fared forth all the night, scouring the desert, and exploring every copse and treeless place, until the morning dawn unfurled its ensigns, when the crier calls to prayer and to salvation. Then I alighted from my beast for the acquittance of the written ordinance, after which I bestrode him again, trying his mettle to the utmost. While I was coursing along, I saw no trace but I tracked it, no ridge but I mounted it, no valley but I fared across it, no rider but I questioned him; but withal my toil was bootless, and its gang to the watering-place found no [way of] return, until the heat waxed blinding, and the scorching noon-day sun would have distracted Ghaylân from his [beloved] Mayyah.

Now the day was longer than the shadow of the spear, and hotter than the tears of the bereft mother, and I made sure that, unless I sought shelter from the glow, and rested myself with slumber, excessive weariness would throw me prostrate with sickness—nay, Sha'ûb [the severer] would cling to me. Hence I bent my way towards a Sarḥah tree, abounding in branches, with boughs thickly leaved, that I might sleep my noon-tide, till to the brink of sun-down; but by Allah, scarcely had my breath fetched air and my horse rested, when I behèld one coming from the left, in the garb of a wayfarer, who resorted to my place of resort, making straight for the spot I had chosen. Then I grudged

his wending whither I had wended, and took refuge with Allah from the annoy of any sudden intruder. But then, again, I hoped that he might chance to be a bringer of news, or approve himself a guide [to my lost one]. And when he came nigh my tree, and had all but reached my biding-place, I found it was our learned friend [Shaykh] of Serûj, wearing his wallet by way of belt, and his travelling gear under his arm. Then he accosted me with friendliness, and made me forget my loss, and I inquired of him, whence he hailed just then and how he fared within and without. Forthwith, without a word of demur, he recited on the spur of the moment:

"Say to him, who would look into the inward state of my affair, thou shalt meet at my hands with all honour and regard.

I am roving from land to land, a night-traveller from one trackless desert to the other.

The chase yields me food, the sandal is my riding-beast, all my equipment the wallet and the ferruled staff.

If I chance to alight in a city, my abode is the garret of the hostelry, and my boon-companion a scroll.

There is nothing mine, that I miss when it is gone, or fret about when the vicissitudes [wiles] of time rob me thereof;

Save that I pass my night free from concern, and my mind has severed partnership with sorrow.

I sleep at night the fill of my eyelids and my heart is cool of burning grief and anxiety;

I reck not from what cup I sip, and sip again, or what is the sweetness that comes from the bitter-sweet;

No, not I, though I allow me not abasement to become an easy road to bounties;

For if an object of desire dons the raiment of shame, out on him who courts a gift,

And whenever a wretch inclines to baseness, my nature shrinks from his fashion and inclining.

Death for me, no base deed; mount the bier liefer, than embark in villainy."

Then he raised his glance to me, and said: "For some purpose did Ḳoṣayr cut off his nose." So I told him the tale of my strayed camel, and what I had endured this day and the by-gone night; and he said: "Leave concerning thyself about things departed, or pining for that which has perished; regret not what is gone, though it were a river of gold; nor incline to him who veers from thee, and kindles the fire of thy anguish, though he were the son of thy loins, or the own brother of thy soul." Then he added: "Hast thou a mind to a noon-day nap, and to abstain from talk? For forsooth our bodies are [as it were] jaded camels for fatigue, and the heat is all aglow; whereas there is nothing to furbish up the mind, and to enliven the languid, like sleep at noon while the blaze is fiercest, especially [most so] in the two months, when the skin of the camel shrivels through excessive thirst." I replied: "As thou wilt, I have no wish to thwart thee." Thereupon he made the ground his bed, and fell a-dozing, nay, soon he gave evidence that he was fast asleep. But I sat leaning on my elbow, to keep watch, and not to succumb to slumber; however, drowsiness overpowered me, after our tongues were bridled, and I recovered not myself, until night had crept in, and the stars began to twinkle, when, lo, there was no friend of Serûj, and, alas, no saddle-beast, so that I passed a night such as Nâbighah sings of, pregnant with the grief of Jacob, while I was battling against my sullenness, and vying with the stars in wakefulness. Now I bethought me that I had henceforth to fare on foot, now in what wise I should retrace my homeward way; until, at the smile of morn, there

appeared to me on the horizon a rider, ambling over the plain with the stride of the ostrich. So I signalled to him with my garment, hoping that he would turn in my direction. He, however, heeded not my signal, nor took he compassion on my anxiety, trotting on at his leisure and smiting my entrails with the arrow of his contempt. Then I hastened in his track, to ask him for a mount behind him, though I should have to put up with his superciliousness. But when I reached him, by dint of hard running, and cast my eye on him with a sweeping glance, I found that my camel was his riding-beast, and what I had lost he had picked up. Then I belied me not in dragging him from her hunch, and tussling with him for the end of her halter, calling out: "I am her master; it is I from whom she has strayed; to me belongs her colt and her milk! So be not like Ash'ab in greediness, and give no trouble, lest thou see trouble!" But he took to abusing and shouting, and he waxed impudent, and would not be abashed; and while he assaulted and relented in turns, now acting the lion, now cowering, behold, there came upon us Abû Zayd, clad in the leopard's skin, rushing along with the rush of the furious torrent. Then I feared, that his feat of to-day might be like his performance of yesterday, that [the brightness of] his full moon would equal [that of] his sun, after which I would join the two tan-gatherers, never to be seen again, and become a [mere] tale after the substance. So I saw no help but to remind him of former bonds, and yesterday's misdeed, and conjured him by Allah, [asking] if he came to make good my wrong, or to encompass my utter ruin. He however said: "God forfend that I

should despatch one whom I have wounded, or follow up the Simoom of my day with a deadly night-blast. Rather have I come to find out the truth of thy state, and to be a right hand to thy left." Thereupon my anxiety was allayed, and my suspiciousness subsided. I made him aware of my milch camel, and of the cloak of insolence that my mate had assumed, when he glanced at him as the lion of the thicket glances at his prey. Then he pointed his lance against him, swearing by Him who kindles the morning, that if he made not away with the swiftness of the fly, and contented himself with escape as the best part of his booty, he would pierce his neck-vein with the spear, and make his offspring and friends mourn for him. Forthwith the fellow let go the halter of the camel, and ran apace, taking to his heels in hottest haste. Abû Zayd said to me: "Seize her and mount her hump, for of the two boons, booty and witness for the faith, she is one, and one woe is easier to bear than two."

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Then I was at a loss, whether to rebuke Abû Zayd, or thank him, and how to balance the benefit received from him, against the damage endured. But it was as if someone had whispered to him the secret of my breast, or he had divined what stirred in my heart, for he accosted me with open brow, and indited with a glib tongue:

"O brother mine who bears up with my injury better than my brethren and own kinsfolk,
If my yesterday has harmed thee, my to-day has brought thee joy.
So forgive that for the sake of this, and spare me both thanks and blame."

Then he added: "I am hasty and thou art sluggish,

how then should we agree?" Wherewith he turned away to cleave the ground, urging his steed to career, aye, what a career! But I tarried not to take seat on my beast, and return to my homestead, and after hap and mishap reached my tent-village.

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF SAMARCAND."

On one of his mercantile journeys Ḥârith arrives at Samarcand early on a Friday morning, and after having refreshed himself in a public bath and performed the ceremonial ablutions incumbent on the day, he hurries to the chief mosque, to be one of the foremost amongst the worshippers. Here he listens attentively to a most impressive sermon on the instability of human destinies, and on the certainty and terrors of death. This address strikes him not only by the forcibleness of its diction, but by the peculiarity, that all the words employed in it consist of letters without diacritical points,—a peculiarity to which he alludes by calling it "a spotless bride." He, therefore, looks closer at the preacher, and soon recognises in him Abû Zayd. After the divine service is over, he accosts him, and, as usual, the meeting between them is most affectionate on both sides. Abû Zayd invites Ḥârith to accompany him to his dwelling, and at nightfall shocks his guest by producing decanters filled with wine. Rebuke and remonstrances are airily met with some verses, spiced with Abû Zayd's reckless philosophy. Relaxing from his habitual austerity, Ḥârith for once does at Rome as the Romans do, and pledged to secrecy under the influence of the cup, he even countenances his abandoned friend before the outside world during his stay in the city.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: In one of my journeys I chose sugar-candy for a merchandise, making with the same for Samarcand, and in those days I was upright of build, brimful of sprightliness, taking sight from the bow of enjoyment at the target of pleasures, and seeking in the sap of my youth help against the

glamours of the water-semblance [mirage]. Now I reached her on a Friday morn, after I had endured hardship, and I bestirred myself without tarrying, until a nightstead was got, and when I had carried there my sugar-candy, and was entitled to say "at home with me," I wended forthwith towards a bath, when I put from me the weariness of travel, and took to the washing of the congregation-day conformably to tradition. Then I hastened with the bearing of the humble to the cathedral mosque, so as to join those who near the prayer-leader, and offer [as it were] the fattened camel, and happily I was foremost in the race, and elected the central place for hearing the sermon. Meanwhile people ceased not to enter in troops into the faith of Allah, and to arrive singly and in pairs, until, when the mosque was crowded with its assembly, and a person had waxed equal with his shadow, the preacher sallied forth, swaggering in the wake of his acolyths, and straightway mounted the steps of the pulpit of the [divine] call, until he stood at its summit, when he gave blessing with a wave of his right hand, sitting down thereafter until the ritual of the cry to prayer was completed. Then he rose and spoke: "Praise be to Allah, the exalted of names, the praised for His bounties, the abundant in gifts, the called upon for the rescinding of calamity ;—king of the nations, restorer of rotten bones, honourer of the folks of forbearance and generosity, destroyer of 'Âd and Irem ;—whose cognizance comes up with every secret, whose compassion encompasses every obdurate in sin, whose munificence comprises all the world, whose power breaks down every revolter.—I praise Him with the praise of one who proclaims

[God's] unity and professes Islâm, I pray to Him with the prayer of the hopeful, the trusting, for He is the God, there is no God but He, the unique, the one, the just, the eternal, there is none begotten to Him, and no begetter, no companion with Him and no helpmate.—He sent forth Mohammed to spread about Islâm, to consolidate religion, to confirm the guidance of the apostles, to straighten the black-hued and the red.—He united womb-connections, he taught the fundamentals of truth, he set a stamp on the lawful and the forbidden, he regulated [laid down the rules for] the doffing and the donning of the pilgrim-cloak.—May Allah exalt his place, and perfect the blessing and benediction upon him, may He have compassion on his race, the worthy, and on his progeny, the uterine, as long as the pile-cloud pours, as long as the dove coos, as long as the cattle graze, as long as the sword assaults.—Work ye, may Allah have mercy upon you, the work of the pious, exert yourselves towards your return [on the resurrection day] with the exertion of the sound, curb your lusts with the curbing of enemies, make ready for your departure with the readiness of the blissful.—Put ye on the robes of abstinence, and put away the ailings of greed, make straight the crookedness of your dealings, and resist the whisperings of hope.—Portray ye to your imaginings the vicissitudes of circumstances, and the alighting of terrors, and the attacks of sickness, and the cutting off from pelf and kin:—Bethink ye yourselves of death, and the agony of its throwing-place, of the tomb and the awfulness of that which is sighted there, of the grave-niche and the loneliness of the one deposed in it, of the angel and the

frightfulness of his questioning and of his advent.—Look ye at fortune and the baseness of its onslaught, and the evil of its deceit and cunning:—How many road-marks has it effaced, how many viands embittered! how many a host has it scattered, how many an honoured king has it overthrown.—Its striving is to strike deaf the ears, to make flow the tear-founts, to baffle desires, to destroy the songster and the listener to the song. Its decree is the same for kings and subjects, for the lord and the henchman, for the envied and the envier, for serpents and for lions.—It enriches not, but to turn away, and reverse hopes; it bestows not, but to outrage and cut into the limbs; it gladdens not, but to sadden, and revile, and injure; it grants no health, but to engender disease and frighten friends.—Fear ye Allah! fear ye Allah! May Allah keep you! How long this persistency in levity, this perseverance in thoughtlessness, this stubbornness in sin, this loading yourselves with crime, this rejection of the word of the wise, this rebellion against the God of heaven?—Is not senility your harvest, and the clod your couch? Is not death your capturer, and [the bridge] Ṣirâṭ your path? Is not the hour [of resurrection] your tryst, and the plain [or hell] your goal? Are not the terrors of doomsday laid in ambush for you? Is not the abode of transgressors Al-Ḥuṭamah, the firmly [safely] locked?—Their warder Mâlik, their comeliness raven blackness, their food poison, their breathing-air the scorching blast!—No wealth prospers them, no offspring; no numbers protect them, and no equipments.—But lo, Allah has mercy upon the man who rules his passion, and who treads the paths of His guidance;

who makes firm his obedience towards his Lord, and strives for the restfulness of his place of refuge; who works while life lasts obedient, and fortune at truce with him, and health perfect and welfare at hand;— Lest he be overtaken by the frustration of his wish, by the faltering of speech, by the alighting of afflictions, by the fulfilment of fate, by the blunting of senses, by the remedy of the sepulchres. Alack on them for a misery whose woefulness is assured, whose term is infinite! He who is remedied thereby is wretched, his distractedness has none to allay it, his regret none to pity it; there is no one to ward off that which befalls him. May then Allah inspire you with the praiseworthiest of inspirations! May He robe you with the robe of glory! May He cause you to alight in the abode of peace! Of Him I ask mercy upon you and on the people of the religion of Islâm, for He is the most forgiving of the generous, the saviour, and peace be with you."—Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now, when I saw that the sermon was a choice thing without a flaw, and a bride without a spot, the wonderment at its admirable strain urged me on to look at the preacher's face, and I began to scan it narrowly, and to let my glance range over him carefully, when it became clear to me by the truth of tokens, that it was our Shaykh, the author of the Assemblies.—There was, however, no help from keeping silent for the time being; so I withheld until he had left off praying, and "the dispersing on the earth" had come. Then I turned towards him, and hastened to meet him, and when he spied me he quickened his pace, and was profuse in doing me honour, bidding me to accompany him to his abode and

making me a confidant of the particulars of his intimate affairs.—Now, when the wing of darkness had spread, and the time for sleep had come, he brought forth wine-flasks secured with plug, whereupon I said to him: "Dost thou quaff it before sleep, and thou the prayer-leader of the people?" But he replied: "Hush! I by day am preacher, but by night make merry."—Said I: "By Allah, I know not whether to wonder more at thy unconcernedness as to thy kinsfolk and thy birthplace, or at thy preacher-office with thy foul habits, and the rotation of thy winecup."—Thereupon he turned his face in disgust from me, and presently he said:—Listen to me:

"Weep not for a friend that is distant, nor for an abode, but turn thyself about with fortune as it turns about.

Reckon thou all mankind thy dwelling-place, and fancy all the earth thy home.

Forbear with the ways of him with whom thou dealest, and humour him, for it is the wise that humours.

Miss thou no chance of enjoyment, for thou knowest not if thou live a day, or if an age.

Know thou that death is going round, and the moon-haloes circle above all created beings.

Swearing that they will not cease chasing them, as long as morn and even turn and re-turn.

How then mayest thou hope to escape from a net, from which neither Kisrá escaped, nor Dârâ."

Said he [the narrator]: And when the cups went between us from hand to hand, and the vital spirits waxed gleeful, he dragged from me the oath that allows no exception, that I would screen his repute [secret]. So I complied with his wish, and kept faith with him, and ranked him before the great in the rank of Al Fuzail, and let down the skirt over the turpitudes of

the night ; and this continued to be his wont and my wont, until the time for my return came, when I took leave from him, while he persisted in hypocrisy and in secretly quaffing old wine.

THE TWENTY-NINTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF WÂSIṬ."

In a Khân or inn at Wâsiṭ, frequented by many travellers, Al Ḥârith overhears his neighbour in the adjoining room tell his son to go to the market with one person, and come back with another, both of whom he describes in enigmatical and fanciful language. His curiosity being roused, he watches the lad's exit, and finding that he starts unaccompanied, he feels still more mystified, and, therefore, follows him to the market, where he sees him give in change a loaf against a flint-stone for striking fire. Then the solution of the riddle dawns upon him, and at the same time he is convinced that the originator of this witticism could be none other but Abû Zayd. Hastening back, he finds his surmise confirmed, for the Serûji was sitting in the courtyard of the hostelry, and after a cordial greeting the two friends were soon deeply engaged in familiar conversation. In response to Abû Zayd's inquiries, Ḥârith tells him that reverses of fortune and the machinations of enemies have forced him to leave his home almost destitute. To help him out of his difficulties, the former proposes to bring about a matrimonial alliance between him and some wealthy people alighted in the Khân, whom he avers to be high-principled, and who would be contented with a dowry of 500 dirhems, a sum which the Prophet used to settle upon his wives and to fix for his daughters as a marriage portion. He promises to undertake the conduct of the transaction, and to crown proceedings by pronouncing at the wedding an address, such as had never been heard before. More eager to listen to this wonderful specimen of oratory, than to set his eyes on the prospective bride, Ḥârith lends himself to the scheme, and Abû Zayd quickly pushes the preliminaries to a satisfactory conclusion, offering himself as security for the 500 dirhems, after which he prepares some sweet-meats for the wedding entertainment. At nightfall he assembles all the inhabitants of the Khân in his room, and after having busied himself with the pretence of

some astronomical calculations, which brings the guests to the verge of sleep, he delivers at the instigation of the impatient Ḥârith the promised speech, in which he displays the marvellous resources of his rhetorical skill, by repeating the principal heads of the sermon in the preceding Assembly in varied diction and under fresh images, while he moreover surpasses its grammatical artifice by excluding this time even the occasionally dotted Hâ of the feminine termination from it. Then he performs the marriage ceremonies, which he concludes with the usual wish for prosperity and male offspring to the newly married couple, and produces his sweet-meats, urging Ḥârith to hand them round, instead of joining in their consumption, as he had been about to do. Scarcely have the company tasted of the dishes, when they fall senseless to the ground. Ḥârith, terrified, at first thinks that they have been poisoned, but Abû Zayd reassuringly informs him that he has only drugged them. Then he coolly begins to collect the contents of all the rooms, and carefully selects everything most valuable, to carry off with him. Ḥârith is amazed at this wild freak and frightened at its consequences, but the Serûji tells him, as far as he himself is concerned, that he and his ill-gotten affluence would soon be at a safe distance, and as for his perplexed friend, he had only to feed on the remainder of the dishes and to allow himself to be stripped, when he would not be held responsible for an outrage of which he himself was a victim; or else to join in the flight, offering even to find a new bride for him to wed. In spite of his indignation, Ḥârith banteringly replies, that he had enough with the first one, and would leave someone else welcome to the second; but when Abû Zayd blandly steps forward, to enfold him in a parting embrace, he draws back in disgust. Then Abû Zayd breaks forth in one of his exquisite pieces of poetry, in which he tries to justify this and many more similar enormities committed previously by the wickedness of the injured people, winding up with a sincere touch of remorse at his own sinfulness, which makes him burst out in tears and earnest supplication for forgiveness. Ḥârith softens towards him, and hoping that he may finally meet with the divine pardon, which is held out to the repentant transgressor, he sees him depart with his son; then collecting his own scanty belongings he continues his journey in the direction of Ṭîb, a town midway between Wâsiṭ and the swamps of the Baṭîḥah.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm related: The decree of waning fortune drove me to the country of Wâsiṭ, and I

repaired thither without knowing one there who would house me, or owning therein a lodging. Now when I alighted there with the alighting of the fish on the dry land, or of the white hair in the black locks, evil hap and receding luck guided me to a Khân frequented by a jumble from every land, and a medley of travellers, which, on account of the cleanliness of the place, and the civility of its inhabitants, enticed the stranger to make himself at home therein, and made him forget the air of his native country. So I secluded myself in one of its chambers, not paying an excess of rent. Then it was not but the a-twinkling of the eye, or the time to scribble a letter, that I heard my next-door neighbour say to his fellow-dweller in the room—"Rise, my dear son, may thy luck not set, nor thy adversary keep on foot, take with thee the one of full-moon face and of pearly hue, of pure root and tormented body, who was pinched and stretched, imprisoned and released, made to drink and weaned, and pushed into the fire, after he had been slapped. Then career to the market the career of the longing swain, and bring back instead of it the pregnant that impregnates, the spoiler who enriches, the saddener who gladdens, the possessor of a puff that sets on fire, and of a germ that breaks forth in light, of an emission [utterance] that satisfies, and of a gift that profits, who, when he is struck, thunders and lightens, and reveals himself in flames, and who sputters on tinder-rags." Then, as soon as the throat-bag of the roaring camel had subsided, and nothing was left but the going of him who was to go, there sallied forth a youth with a graceful swagger, and no mate with him. So I saw that it was a tight knot to make game of

understandings and to render one eager to enter into the idle fancies [absurdities]. I therefore set out in the track of the youth, to find out the meaning of the speech. Then he ceased not bustling himself with the bustle of sprites, and searching amongst the rows of market shops, until he came at last to a store of flint-stones, and gave their seller a loaf [or cake], receiving from him a fine flint in return. Then I wondered at the sagacity of the sender and the sent one, and I knew that it was of Serûji growth, and I tarried not in hastening back to the Khân, giving myself the rein, to test the truth of my surmise and whether my arrow had hit the mark in its divining. And, for sooth, I proved an expert in sharpness of sagacity, for Abû Zayd was sitting in the courtyard of the Khân. Then we congratulated each other on the meeting, and mutually paid the dues of the welcoming of friends. Whereupon he said: "What is it that befell thee, so that thou didst quit thy place?"—Said I: "Fortune broke and oppression was rife."—He replied: "By Him who sends down the rain from the clouds, and makes come forth the fruit from its sheath, times are foul and iniquity [wrong] prevails on all sides, and the helper is not to be found, but Allah is the One besought for help. How then gottest thou away and which of the twain was thy state when thou wentest off?"—Said I: "I made night my shirt and set out early in it, a starveling."—Then he pricked holes in the ground with his stick, and bethought him how to find a loan or procure a gift for me. Presently he stirred with the stirring of one to whom a prey comes near, or an opportunity presents itself, and said: "It just occurred to my

heart that thou mightest ally thyself with one who heals thy wound and feathers thy wing."—Said I: "How then am I to make union between the neck-ring and an empty purse, and who is it that will have Ẓull, son of Ẓull [Nobody, son of Nobody]?"—Then he said: "It is I, who shall drop hints of thee and for thee, and be proxy in and on thy behalf, besides that the people profess to set the broken bone, and to ransom the prisoner, and to hold in honour their kith and kin, and to consult the adviser; save that, if Ibrahîm, son of Adham, proposed to them, or Jebeleh, son of Ayham, they would not give in marriage unless for five hundred dirhems, in accordance with that which the Prophet, may Allah bless and hallow him, settled on his wives, or stipulated for the dowries of his daughters, with the proviso, that no portion should be claimed from thee, if thou wert driven to seek refuge in divorcement. Then I will deliver at the place of thy betrothal and at the gathering of thy wedding-guests an address such as has not opened an obstructed ear, and has not been pronounced the like of it in any assembly." —Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now he roused my spirits more by the description of the address to be indited, than of the bride to be displayed, so that I said to him: "I entrust thee with the affair, so manage it with the management of him who is sharp-witted in the interest of him he loves." Forthwith he rose, trotting away briskly, then returned beaming, and said: "Rejoice at the tidings of fortune, and the milking of an abundant flow. I have already been charged with fixing the contract, and stood security for the money, so the thing is all but settled. Thereupon he took to

pledging all the people of the Khân [to be present at the appointed time], and to preparing sweet-meats for the table. Then when night had extended her tent-ropes, and every owner of a door had closed his door, he called out to the assembly: "Halloo! be present instantly," and none of them lagged to obey his voice, and to enter his room. Now, when they stood in rows before him, and the witness and witnessed upon were gathered, he busied himself in raising the astrolabe and lowering it, and in consulting the almanack and laying it aside, until the people became drowsy, and sleep drew nigh. Said I to him: "Ho, Sirrah, put the axe to the block, and free the people from sleepiness." Then he cast a glance at the stars, and breaking loose from the tie of silence, he swore by [mount] Ṭûr, and the written book, that the secret of this hidden matter should be unravelled and its memory spread forth unto the day of resurrection. Whereupon he sat in a kneeling position, and invited the ears to feed on his address, saying: "Praise be to Allah the king glorified with praise, the beloved Lord, the fashioner of every born one, the refuge of every outcast, the spreader of earth's couch, the fastener of the mountains, the sender of rains, the smoother of difficulties, who knows all secrets and penetrates them, who overthrows kings and destroys them, who makes follow each other the ages in their turns, who initiates affairs and brings them to an issue.—His bounty is universal and perfect, His rain-cloud pours and showers, He answers request and hope, He makes it easy for the distressed and widowed.—I praise Him with the praise that endureth through all times, I proclaim His unity, as Abraham, the sorrowful,

proclaimed it, for He is God, there is no God to the nations besides Him, there is none who inclines to that which would counterbalance or equal Him.—He sent Mohammed, a standard to Islâm, an Imâm to rulers, a fortifier of the lowly, an abolisher of the rights of Wadd and Suwâ, for he made known and taught, he restrained and established, he rooted firmly the principles of faith and propagated them, he confirmed promises and uttered threats.—May Allah never cease to bestow honour on him, and bring his spirit to the abode of peace, may he have compassion on his race and house, the noble, as long as a mirage glitters, as a young of the ostrich runs, as a new moon rises, as a shout that greets the same is heard.—Work ye, may Allah keep you, the best of works, and tread the paths of lawfulness, throw ye off the forbidden, and abandon it, and listen to the command of Allah, and obey it; unite ye the blood-relations and revere them, and resist the lusts and repel them; ally ye yourselves to people of righteousness and piety; and cut yourselves off from the band of wantonness and greed.—Now the seeker of your alliance is the purest of freemen as to birth, and the noblest of them as to lordliness, the sweetest as for a watering-place, and the soundest as for keeping his word.—Behold he has come to you and alighted in your sanctuary to wed your bride, the honoured, and to settle a dowry upon her as the Prophet settled upon Umm Salamah;—and he is the worthiest of sons-in-law to whom children have been trusted and who was made possessed of what he desired,—he who gives to him in marriage is not hasty nor errs he, the one who enters with him in relationship is neither foiled nor soiled.—I

ask from Allah for you to approve of his connection, and to prosper him lastingly, and may He inspire each one to seek improvement of his state and to make ready for his return. To Him be eternal praise, and glory to his Apostle Mohammed." Now when he had ended his address, marvellous of disposition, void of punctuation, he concluded the marriage contract at the settlement of the five hundred, after which he said to me: "For ease and sons!"—Then he brought forth the sweet-meats which he had prepared and set going a feast to be remembered for aye. I advanced [stepped up] to them as the company advanced [stepped up] and was nigh to stretch out my hand towards them, but he scared me from eating and urged me to hand them round, when, lo, by Allah it was not in quicker time than the eyelids meet, that the people fell prone upon their chins. Then when I saw them like the roots of a falling date-tree, or like those thrown by the daughter of the wine-cask, I knew for sooth that it was an unexampled mischief, and the mother of precedents. So I said to him: "O thou arch-fiend of thy own soul, and vile slave of thy coin, hast thou prepared for the people sweets, or a bane?"—Said he: "I have not gone beyond a mess of banj in trays of the Khalanj tree."—Then I said: "I swear by Him who makes the stars rise in brightness and guides by them all wayfarers, thou hast done a hateful thing and secured thee a record amongst shameful deeds." Thereupon I was bewildered at thought of what would come of his affair, and with fear of infection from his scab, so that my soul fluttered within me distractedly, and my side-muscles quivered with fright. Then, when he saw the

extent of my fear and the excessiveness of my anxiety, he said; "What is this burning thought and this white-hot fear? If thy concern at my offence is for the sake of me, know that I am now well off and gone, freeing this spot from my presence, and leaving it void of me, and how many like it have I quitted to remain deserted. But if it is with a view to thyself, and from apprehension of thy imprisonment, then partake of the remainder of the mess, and be contented to be without thy shirt, so as to be safe against the redresser and the seeker of redress, that thy stay after me may be tranquil. But if not, the flight! the flight! before thou be captured and dragged away." Forthwith he proceeded to clear out whatever there was in the rooms of money-sacks and chests, and began to appropriate the selected part of everything stored, and the choicest of everything measured and weighed, so that he left that which his net spared, like a bone voided of its marrow. Then after he had bagged that which he had chosen, and tied it in bundles, and had tucked up his sleeves and girded himself, he accosted me as accosts one who has donned impudence, and arrayed himself with the garb of sincere friendship, saying: "Hast thou a mind to accompany me to the Baṭiḥah, so that I may wed thee to another fair one?"—Then I made oath to him by Him who had created him to be blessed wherever he might find himself, and not of those who commit felony in a Khân, that I had it not in me to marry two freeborn and to cohabit with twain rival wives, moreover said I to him in the language of one who humours his humour, and measures to him with his own bushel: "The first suffices me for a boast, so

seek another one for the other."—Then he smiled at my speech and stepped forward to embrace me, but I turned from him my cheek and showed him my repugnance. So when he saw my shrinking back, and my aversion became manifest to him, he indited :

"O thou, who turnest away from me, for it is time's nature to be fraught with turns,

And rebukest me for my foul treatment of those whom I had for neighbours, with the rebuke of the harsh :

Thou comprehendest me not in what I have done, but as for them, I know them full well :

Heretofore I sought their hospitality, and I saw them unheedful of their guests.

I probed them, and when I tested them I found them to be base coin.

Amongst them is none but who strikes terror when he can, or else is terror-stricken.

None sincere in friendship, none trustworthy, none benevolent, none kindly disposed.

So I sprang upon them the spring of the tearing wolf upon the sheep,

And left them prostrate, as if they had been made to drink the cup of death,

And my hand possessed itself of what they had hoarded, for they were the abhorrence of men's nostrils.

Then I wended my way with booty sweet of cullings and reapings.

For sooth, often times I left behind me one wounded of entrails, who slunk after me when I had gone.

And despoiled the owners of state-chairs and carpets and curtains.

How much have I obtained by my cunning that was not obtained by the sword,

And stood my ground in terrors, such that lions would shrink from facing.

How often have I shed blood, and slain unawares and desecrated the sanctuary of the high-minded ;

How many a pernicious course have I taken into sin, how many a headlong rush,

But withal I have laid in a goodly opinion with regard to my Lord, the Compassionate."

Said the narrator : Now when he had reached this

couplet, he was excessive in weeping and persistent in asking for forgiveness, until he propitiated the inclination of my heart that had turned from him, and I hoped for him that which is hoped for the guilty who confesses to his guilt. Thereupon he let subside his flowing tears, and putting his wallet under his arm-pit, he made off, saying to his son: "Carry the rest, and Allah be the protector." Said the reporter of this tale: So when I saw the snake and the little snake slip away, and the cure terminate in the cautery, I knew that my tarrying in the Khân would drag me into ignominy. I, therefore, collected my few chattels, and gathered my skirt for departure, passing my night in faring towards Ṭîb, and relying on Allah against [the mischief of] the preacher.

THE THIRTIETH ASSEMBLY, "CALLED OF ṢÛR."

The only reason for calling this Assembly after the city of Ṣûr (Tyre) seems to be that the Râwi, who perhaps in this case may be identified with Ḥarîri himself, wished to pay her a tribute of grateful remembrance for a period of exceptional prosperity, which he had passed there. The real scene of action is Cairo, whither he had journeyed from the former place under the impulse of a sudden fancy, and where he was indulging in a somewhat dissipated and indolent life of pleasure. While riding one day about the town, he encountered a gaily arrayed troop of horsemen, who, as he ascertained by inquiry, were on their road to witness a wedding-feast. Hoping to meet with an enjoyable pastime, he follows them to a distant mansion, which, although grand of appearance, is adorned in an odd manner with ragged clothes, and baskets such as beggars use for carrying the produce of their rounds. He asks an aged porter for the name of the owner of the building, and is informed that it has no particular master, but is the gathering-place of strolling people of every description, and on entering, he finds, that however poor and squalid the assembled may be indi-

vidually, as a congregation or guild they know how to fare luxuriously when the occasion demands it. Presently the bridegroom appears in all his pomp, and a herald proclaims that the old and revered chief of the begging fraternity himself is about to solemnize the forthcoming marriage ceremony. The announced exalted personage steps forward and is respectfully greeted, and delivers a discourse, in which his earnest and impressive remarks on the duties of the rich towards the poor, and on the divine purpose in founding the institution of matrimony, form an amusing contrast to his description, at once high-flown and humorous, of the couple to be united in wedlock. After the ceremony is finished, the company repair, under his lead, to a richly dressed table, and Ḥârith is on the point of departing, when the old man calls to him reprovingly and bids him to stay. He swears that he would not do so, unless the other told him who he was, and is answered in some touching verses, in which the speaker exalts in glowing colours the beauties of his native town Serûj, and bitterly bewails his expulsion from it by ruthless enemies. Ḥârith now easily recognises Abû Zayd in spite of his disguise, and the change which old age has wrought in him, and passes the remainder of the day, as well as his evenings during his sojourn in Cairo, in his instructive and delightful company.

Al Ḥâreth son of Hammâm related: I fared from the city of Manṣûr [Bagdad] to the town Ṣûr [Tyre], and when I had become there the possessor of high rank and of affluence, and powerful to raise and to abase, I longed for Miṣr [Egypt and Cairo] with the longing of the sick for the physicians, and the generous for the bestowing of bounties. So I left behind me the attachments of stay, and shook off the impediments of travel, and, bestriding [a steed like] Ibnu'n-Na'âmeh, I hastened towards her with the swiftness of the ostrich. Now when I had entered her, after sustaining hardships and being on the point of destruction, I was delighted thereat with the delight of one intoxicated by drinking morning draughts, and one dazzled by the break of morning brightness. And when I was one day loitering about, beneath me a steed of stately pace, I

beheld on short-haired nags, a troop of men like the lamps of night. So I inquired for the sake of procuring me a pleasure-trip, about the troop and their destination, when I was told that the people were witnesses and their goal a wedding to be witnessed. Then the sprightliness of youth urged me to fare along with the foragers, so as to obtain a share in the sweets of the bridal scatterings and get some of the delicacies of the festive board. Presently we came, after enduring fatigue, to a mansion high of structure, wide of area, which testified to the builder's wealth and exalted station. When we alighted from horse-back and put forward our steps to enter it, I saw its vestibules adorned with tattered garments, and garlanded [coronated] with begging-baskets hung round, and there was an aged man sitting on a cloth of piled stuff, upon a handsome bench. Now the title-page of the book, and the sight of this strange furniture, made one doubtful, and the evil augury of these ill-omened objects induced me to accost that man on the seat, and I adjured him by the dispenser of destinies to let me know who was the lord of this mansion. Said he: "It has no distinct owner and no manifest master, it is but the inn of the importune beggars and low artisans, and the den of ballad-singers and rehearsers of the traditions." Then I said within myself: "For Allah's sake, out upon a fool's errand, and the failure of my pasture," and I intended to return at once, but then I considered my sudden departure and my going back without the others to be churlish. So I entered the house reluctantly, as one drinking choking draughts [lit. drinking draughts that make one choke], or as the sparrow enters the cage. Then, lo! there were in it

richly adorned state-chairs, and spread carpets, and cushions laid in rows, and arrayed curtains. Presently stepped forth the bridegroom, swaggering in his *burdah* [mantle of striped stuff], and strutting like a lion in the midst of his attendants, and when he had sat down as though he were the son of Mâ'u's-samâ', there cried out a crier on the side of his relatives: "By the reverence due to Sâsân, grand-master of masters and pattern of sturdy beggars, none ties this knot on this day white of forehead and extremities, but he who has roved and roamed, who has been young and waxed old in adversity." Then the company [kith] on the bride's side were well pleased with that which yonder people [the bridegroom's relations] had proclaimed with regard to the bringing in their presence the one indicated. Forthwith sallied forth an old man whose stature the days and nights had bent, whose Thaghâm[1] tree the morns and eves had decked with blossoms. Then the congregation rejoiced at his approach and hastened forward to welcome him, and when he had sat down on his carpet, and the turmoil of voices had subsided, he advanced to his cushion, and stroked his beard with his hand, whereupon he spoke: "Praise be to Allah, the foremost in munificence, the ever new in bestowing bounties, to whom we are brought near by supplication, on whom we are made to rely for the accomplishment of hopes, who has ordained the legal alms from every property, and sternly forbidden the refusal of suppli-cants, who has impressed on man to relieve the distressed, and commanded to feed him that begs and him

[1] Thaghâm is the name of a white blossoming tree frequently used in Arabic poetry as an emblem of hoary old age.

that refuses to beg; who has described His servants in His book, the manifest, when He spoke, and He is the most truthful of speakers: 'Those who know well that the supplicant and the destitute have a claim on their riches.'—I praise Him for that which He has dispensed of wholesome food, and I take refuge with Him from hearing a prayer void of intention. And I testify there is no God but God, the One, without a partner to Him for a god, who requites the alms-giving men and women, who withdraws His blessing from usury, and rewards alms with lavish interest. Furthermore I attest, that Mohammed is His sincere servant, and His honoured Apostle. He sent him that he might efface the darkness by the light, and secure to the poor a share from the rich, and he compassioned, may God bless and hallow him, with the destitute, and lowered his wing to the lowly; he made obligatory the claims on the possessions of the wealthy, and made clear what is the due to those who have little on the part of those who have much.—May Allah bless him with a blessing that obtains for him proximity [to God's throne], as well as the elected of the stone-bench [certain Companions of the Prophet].—But now, Allah, be He exalted, has made matrimony a law so that you may be chaste, and instituted propagation so that you may multiply, for He said so that you may know: 'O ye men, we have created you from a male and female, and made you clans and tribes, so that you may recognise each other.'—Now this is Abû'd-darrâj Wallâj [ingoer], son of Kharrâj [out-goer], lord of the impudent face, and manifest mendacity, of yelping and shouting, of importunity and persistency in begging;—who

woos the shrew of her people, fit mate of her husband, Qanbas [spit-fire], daughter of Abû 'Anbas [frowning lion], for the sake of that which reached him of her being clad with pertinacity, and her excessiveness in stooping to beggary, and her quickness in grasping a livelihood, and her rising after a fall, along with her combativeness. And he has lavished upon her for a dowry a wallet and a ferruled stick, together with a kerchief and a pitcher. So marry him as one like him is to be married, and join your rope with his rope, and if you fear poverty or want [through increase of family], Allah will give you a sufficiency out of His bounty. Thus I say my say, craving forgiveness from Allah, the Mighty, for me and you, and praying that He may multiply your offspring in the beggar-dens, and guard all of you from dangers."—Then, when the Shaykh had ended his discourse, and pressed upon the bride's relatives her contract, there fell of scatterings a shower, that exceeded the limits of abundance, and would have made the miser to excel in liberality. Thereupon the Shaykh rose, trailing his skirts and preceding his rabble.—Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Then I followed him, so that I might see the array of the people, and complete the enjoyment of the day. Forthwith he turned with them to a table that its dressers had adorned, and whose every side equalled the other in beauty. And when each one had seated himself in his proper place and begun to cull freely in his garden, I slipped out of the row, and fled from the throng. But then it happened that a turn of the Shaykh's face fell in my direction, and that a glance from his eye caught me unawares, when he said: "Whither, O thou

curmudgeon? Dost thou not affect the company of him who is generous?"—Said I: "By Him, who created the heavens one above another, and permeated them with light, I will not taste a morsel, nor turn in my mouth a bit, unless thou tell me where is the sprawling-place of thy youth, and whence thy breeze is blowing." Then he fetched a deep sigh, and shed tears in torrents, until he had exhausted their flow, and bid the company to be silent, when he said to me: "Lend me thy hearing:

"My birth-place was Serûj, and there I heaved lustily my billows,
A city where all is found, and gotten readily and in abundance.
Her waters spring from Salsabîl, her fields are pleasure-meads,
Her sons and her palaces, stars they are and sidereal mansions.
Hail her breeze of fragrancy, her aspect lovely to behold!
And the flowers of her hills, when the snows have melted away.
Who sees her says the haven of earthly Eden is Serûj.
To him who leaves her sighs are meted and smothered weeping,
Such as I have met, since the Barbarians drove me thence,
Tears that pour and bitter anguish, that, scarcely calmed, will rage afresh,
Day-long grief whose engrossing cares distract the mind.
How many struggles for hopefulness, short of step, frustrated!
Would that my fatal day had come, when I was fated to depart from her."

When he had indicated his native town, and I had understood that which he had recited, I knew for a certainty that he was our most learned Abû Zayd, although old age had now shackled him. So I sallied forth to put my hand in his, and I reckoned it a booty to eat with him from his platters. And I continued the time of my stay in Cairo to resort nightly to his guest-fire, and to fill both my shells with the pearls of his utterances, until the raven of separation croaked between us, and I parted with him as the lid would part with the eye.

THE THIRTY-FIRST ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF RAMLAH."

The subject of this Assembly has so aptly and succinctly been stated by Mr. Chenery in the summary of the 24 Assemblies not translated by him, that any attempt to improve on him would be presumption. We therefore reproduce here the passage referring to it from his Introduction, p. 76 of Vol. I. The Thirty-first Assembly, he says, is a composition of exquisite beauty. Ḥârith makes the pilgrimage to Mecca, and there finds Abû Zayd, who addresses the worshippers first in the usual rhymed prose, and then in verse, on the duties of true religion. The Ḥajj, he tells them, does not consist in hastening on camels to the holy city, or wearying the body, or parting from home and children, but in adding to these performances abstinence from sin, purity of intention, and the practice of virtue; for "washing in fonts cleanses not from immersion in sins, the baring of the body compensates not for the laying up of guilt, nor will the donning of the pilgrim's garb avail him who clothes himself with the forbidden." The verses which follow are inspired by the loftiest morality. When he has concluded, Ḥârith approaches him, but Abû Zayd declares that he has a vow not to associate with anyone during his pilgrimage, nor to make gain, nor to recite his pedigree, nor to ask alms. As the pilgrims pass by on their journey he again addresses them in edifying verse.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: In the prime of my youth and the freshness of vigorous life, I hated making my den in the thickets [towns], and loved slipping out of the scabbard, from my ken, that travel fills the provision bags and produces gain, while cleaving to one's country hamstrings [houghs] the intellect and lowers the Stay-at-home. So I shook the [divining-] arrows of seeking advice and rubbed the fire-sticks of choosing the best, whereupon I made up my mind firmer than rocks, and started towards the shores of Shâm [Syria] for the purpose of trading. Now when I had tented at Ramlah, and thrown down the staff of

travel, I found there montures being made ready for night-faring, and saddles being strapped for [travelling to] the mother of Cities [Mecca]. Then the gale of longing blew strongly within me, and a craving for the holy house seized on me passionately, so that I haltered my camel, and flung from me my engagements and ties,

And said to him who blamed me, "Cut it short, for fain choose I the 'stand' [*maqâm*, the standing-place of Abraham] before the stay,
And spend, what I have gathered, on the gathering-ground [Muzdalifeh], forgetting for the sacred stone the metal cursed."

Then I strung myself together with a travelling-company like the stars of heaven, who in their faring sped with the torrent's rush, and coursed in quest of their good with the course of the race-horse. So, between night-journeying and journeying by day, between trotting and ambling, we abated not, until the legs of our beasts had done us rare service, in bringing us to Juḥfah [the station where the pilgrims from Syria assembled, before setting out for the general meeting-place, Muzdalifeh, next to Mecca]. Then we alighted therein, making ready for donning the pilgrim's cloak, and wishing each other joy in having attained to our desire. But no sooner had we made kneel our beasts in the place, and laid down the saddle-bags, when there came in sight of us from amongst the mountains a person, exposed [bare] of skin, and who cried out: "O ye people of this concourse, hither with you to that which rescues on the day of the mutual call [*tanâdî*]." Then the pilgrims hastened towards him, and gathered and surrounded him and waxed silent, and when he

saw their propping up to him, and their eagerness to feed on his discourse, he ascended one of the mounds, then he hawked, opening up his speech, and said: "O ye company of pilgrims, flocking together from the mountain-paths, do you comprehend what you are about to face and whom you go to meet? Or do you know whom you approach, and what you are undertaking boldly? Do you imagine that Hajj is (means) the choosing of saddle-beasts and the traversing of stations, the taking seat in litters, and the loading of beasts of burden? Or do you opine that piety is the tucking up of sleeves, and the emaciating of bodies, the separation from children and the getting far from your native places? Ay no, by Allah, but it is the shunning of transgressions before preparing the beast, the sincerity of purpose in making for yonder building, and the purity of submissiveness along with the fervour of devotion, the mending of dealings, before working the doughty camels. By Him who prescribed the rites for the devout, and guides astraight the wanderer in the raven-black night, the washing with bucketfuls cleanseth not from being immersed in [the mire of] sin, and the stripping of bodies counterbalances not for being loaden with crime, nor makes the donning of the pilgrim's cloak amends for being wrapped up in the forbidden. The being plaided with the Izâr profits not, when one is burdened with iniquities, nor avails the seeking of approach [to God] by getting one's head shaved when one busies himself in shaving mankind. Obsequiousness in clipping the hair (after completion of the pilgrimage) rubs not off the dirt of persistency in shortcomings. None prospers [by visiting mount]

'Arafât, but he who is endowed with wisdom, nor is any blessed [hallowed] by Al Khayf, who is addicted to injustice. None witnesses the standing place [of Abraham], but he who stands upright, and he rejoices not in the acceptance of his pilgrimage who swerves from the right path. So have Allah mercy upon the man who is sincere [pure], before his running to [mount] Ṣafâ, and treads the road of the divine pleasure, before his repairing to the tanks [of the well Zamzam]; who puts off his dissimulation before doffing his garments, and excels in his beneficence, before his rushing down from 'Arafât." Then he raised his shrill note with a voice to make hear the deaf, and wellnigh shaking the mountain-peaks, and indited:

"The Ḥajj is not thy travelling by day and night, and thy selecting camels and camel-litters,

The Ḥajj is that thou repair to the holy house for the sake of Ḥajj, not that thou accomplish thy wants thereby.

That thou bestride the back of righteousness, taking the check of lust for guide, and truth for high-road.

That thou bestow what has been given thee while in thy power, to him who in his need tenders his hand towards thy gift.

A pilgrimage with all this fraught is perfect, but if the Ḥajj is void thereof it proves abortive.

For a losing-bargain of dissemblers it suffices that they plant and reap not, having met with toil and exile,

And that they go without reward or praise, giving their fame a bait to him who censures and lampoons.

Seek then, dear brother, in what sacrifice thou mayest offer up, the face of God, the guardian, going in and out.

For lo, no hidden deed shall remain hidden from the Compassionate, whether the servant be sincere or shamming,

And steal a march on death by good deeds sent afore: death's sudden summons, when it comes, is not put off;

And use humility in frame of mind, such as the nights can, in their turns, not alter, though a crown they gave thee.

And watch not every cloud whose lightning flasheth, though it appear to pour a rain of copious shower.

Not every caller merits to be heard, how many a whisperer shouted fatal news,
And none is wise but he who contents him with a morsel, that makes life's days to folden by degrees;
For every mickle comes to be a mite, and meek grows every stiff-necked, rage he as he may!"

Said the narrator: Now, when he had fructified the barrenness of our understandings with the witchcraft of his say, I sniffed the breeze of Abû Zayd, and delight made me incline to him with what a thrill of affection. But I kept still until he had completed the expounding of his wisdom, and came down from his hillock, when I slipped towards him, so that I might scan the traits of his countenance, and descry the nature of his accomplishments. And lo, it was the stray for whom I had searched, and the threader of the pearl-strings that he had displayed. Then I clung to him with the clinging of the Lâm to the Alif, and ranked him as recovery is ranked with the sick, and I asked him to join me, but he refused, or to poise me [on my camel], but he declined, saying: "I have made oath in this my pilgrimage, that I would neither ride together nor alternately with any one, neither make gain nor boast of pedigree, neither seek profit, nor companionship, nor else accommodate myself to him who dissembles." Then he went in haste, and left me wailing, while I ceased not to shelter him in my sight (hoping for his return), nay, would have loved him to walk on the pupil of my eye, until he had climbed up one of the mountains, and stood watching the pilgrims, and when he witnessed the riders faring onward over the sand-hills, he made hand fall upon hand, and broke forth inditing:

"He who visits on the back of beasts is not like him who runs on foot,
No, nor is the servant who obeys like him who riots amongst servants.
How, O people, should the toil be like, of him who builds and who pulls down?
Sinners soon will have to call the mourning-women of repentance,
While the seeker of approach to God says, "Hail to him who has done service."
Send then forward, I beseech thee, soul, deeds of acceptance with the Lord of old,
Scorn the tinsel of this earthly life, for its existence is but naught,
And remind thee of the throw of death, when unawares his stroke befalls,
And bewail thy work of shame, forth shedding tears of blood for it,
Curing it with sore repentance, before the hide all through is rotten.
May then be, that Allah guard thee, against the fire that blazes fiercely,
On the day when sin is cancelled no more, tardy repentance vain."

Then he sheathed the blade of his tongue, and went on his way. But I ceased not, in every water-station that we came to, and every night-camp where we pillowed, to search for him, but failed, and to ask people to help me seeking him, but they found him not, until I fancied that the Jinn had snatched him up or the earth had cut him off. And never in my peregrinations suffered I a grief like this, nor was I in any travel tried with its like of sorrow.

THE THIRTY-SECOND ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF ṬAYBEH."

This is one of the most elaborate and important, as well as of the longest and most difficult of the Assemblies. Ḥârith has completed the ceremonies of the Pilgrimage to Mecca, and intends to follow it up by the visitation of Mohammed's tomb at Ṭaybeh, one of the names given to Medina. On his road he meets in the homestead of one of the intermediate Arab tribes Abû Zayd, who this time has assumed the character of a mufti or jurisconsult and adept in the sacred and secular law of Islâm. A large gathering of people has collected around him, whose spokesman proposes to him a hundred questions on various canonical and legal points, as the religious obligations of ceremonial ablution, prayer, fast, almsgiving, pilgrimage, on buying and selling, the duties of magistrates towards orphans or weak-minded persons, on principles of moral conduct, and so on—questions which are calculated to exhibit Abû Zayd at the same time as learned in the law and in the rarest idioms of the Arabic tongue. For his answers, while startling the ordinary hearer by being the opposite of what would be expected, prove perfectly correct, if the leading word be taken in a certain more recondite sense. For instance the question is: "May a woman be rebuked for being bashful?" to which Abû Zayd, no doubt to Mrs. Grundy's horror, replies "To be sure," because he gives to the verbal noun *khajal*, in everyday parlance "being ashamed or bashful," the rarer meaning of "being overbearing when in possession of riches," in support of which Ḥarîri quotes a remarkable saying of Mohammed, recorded in the Traditions. As Chenery (vol. i., p. 78) appositely observes, similar puzzles were not unknown in Europe, as the question: "Num peccatum est occidere patrem suum," where not "one's own father," but "the father of swine," is meant. Ḥarîri has not given the interpretation of the ambiguous terms as an integral part of the text, but inserted it in parenthesis after each question, and with the help of these explanations, which, in case of need, we have supplemented with a few additional remarks, the reader will find no difficulty in following the general drift of the Assembly. If some of the questions appear childish, he must remember that Ḥarîri, while satisfying to the fullest extent the taste of his countrymen for the discussion of grammatical, rhetorical, and religious points of controversy, raises himself with a fine touch of irony above it, where such discussions degenerate into mere quibbles.

But for the most part, we feel confident the reader will be amused and interested, and as a study on the synonyms and idioms of the Arabic Language the Assembly is invaluable.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: At one time when I had completed the rites of the Ḥajj and absolved the duties of [the shout] *labbaika*, and the outpour of the blood of the sacrifice, I resolved to make for Ṭaybeh, with a travelling company of the Benû Shaibah, to visit the tomb of the Prophet, the Elected, and to disengage myself from the tribe of those "who perform the Ḥajj and neglect him (Mohammed)." Now it was rumoured that the roads were unsafe and the Arabs of the two sanctuaries at war. So I was bewildered between fear that made me lag, and longing that stirred me on, until submissiveness was infused into my heart, and the predominance of [my desire for] the visiting of him upon whom be peace. Therefore, after having chosen my beast, and made ready my travelling-gear, I journeyed along with my companions without inclining to any halt, or remissness in faring on day and night, till we came to the Benû Ḥarb, who had just returned from the war. Then we made up our minds to pass the length of the day in the encampment of the people, and while we were selecting a place for making kneel down our camels, and spying for the watering-pond, and a cool drink, lo, we saw them running as if they were flocking to some idol. So their swarming roused our suspicions, and we asked what was the matter with them. Then we were told that a learned legist of the Arabs was present in their assembly, and that this was the reason of their turmoil. Said I to my company: "Halloo! let us witness the gathering of the clan, so

as to learn clearly to distinguish the right from the wrong." Thereupon they said: "Truly, what thou proposest is worth hearing, and thou hast given good advice without stint." Accordingly we rose to follow our guide and repair to the assembly, until, when we came near it, and stretched our necks to see the legist to whom they had crowded, I found him to be Abû Zayd, the father of lies and tricks, and of mischief and choice rhymes. He had donned the turban in the orthodox fashion and gathered his garment in proper style, and was sitting crosswise, while the great ones of the clan surrounded him, and their medley enwrapped him from all sides. Presently he said to them: "Put questions to me on the points of intricacy, and let me explain to you all difficulties, for by Him who created the heavens, and taught Adam the names [of all things], I am the legist of the Arabs of the Arabians, and the most learned of those that live under the star-pocked sky." Then there stalked up to him a man glib of tongue, stout of heart, saying: "Know, that I have had converse with the legists of the world to the effect that I have selected from them a hundred decisions, and if thou be of those who loathe the daughters of others (meaning lies, untruth, falsehood), and desire from us sound food, then listen and answer, so that thou mayest get thee thy due. He replied: "God is greatest (Allah akbar), the truth will become evident, and the hidden be disclosed, so say what thou art bidden." He said: "What sayest thou with regard to him, who has made an ablution (*wuẓû*), and afterwards touched the backside of his shoe?" He replied: "His ablution is invalidated by his doing so" (*na'l*, a

shoe, and also "wife"). He said: "And when he has made an ablution, and afterwards the cold has thrown him on his side?" He replied: "Then let him renew his ablution" (*al-bard*, cold, and also "sleep"). He said: "May one who makes an ablution rub with his hands his testicles?" He replied: "He is invited to do so, but it is not made obligatory on him" (*unṣaí*, the two testicles, and also "both ears"). He said: "Is it allowed to make ablution with that which the serpent emits?" He replied: "And is there anything cleaner than it for the Arabs?" (*ṣu'bân*, a large serpent, and also pl. of *ṣa'b*, "water-course in a valley, river"). He said: "Is the water [fetched by the hands of] a blind man lawful?" He replied: "Yea, and let that of the seeing man be avoided" (*ẓarîr*, the word translated with blind man, in whose case the water fetched by him would not be lawful for ablution, because he cannot know whether it is pure or not, means also "river-side," against the water of which there is no objection. On the other hand *al-baṣîr*, the seeing man, means also "dog," and in their case the reverse would hold good: the water fetched by the former is chosen with discernment, and therefore not to be avoided, while "the water of the dog" would be the height of abomination). He said: "Is washing (*ghusl*) incumbent upon him who has lost sperm?" He replied: "Nay, even if he does so a second time" (*amnâ*, he lost or emitted sperm, and also "he went to Miná," the sacred valley near Mecca). He said: "Is it then incumbent on one polluted by seminal loss to wash his fur-coat?" He replied: "To be sure, and also his needle" (*al-farwah*, fur-coat, means also "skin of the

head," and *al-ibrah*, needle, has moreover the signification "bone of the elbow"). He said: "Is circumambulation in the spring permitted?" He replied: "This is abominated on account of the execrable occurrence" (*taṭawwuf*, circumambulation, means also "easing nature," and *ar-rabî'*, spring, early vegetation, signifies also "streamlet," the defilement of which would be a hideous crime). He said: "Is the washing of his book incumbent on him?" He replied: "Yea, and also of his lip" (*aṣ-ṣaḥîfah*, book, and also "lines of the face"). He said: "How is it then, if he fails to wash his hatchet?" He replied: "It is as though he neglected to wash his head" (*al-fa's*, hatchet, and also "bone of the occiput"). He said: "Is it allowed to wash in a wallet?" He replied: "It is like washing in wells" (*jirâb*, a leather bag, and also "the inside of a well"). He said: "And what sayest thou with regard to one who has used sand for his ablution, and afterwards sees gardens?" He replied: "His rubbing with sand is void, and he has to make his ablution afresh" (*rauẓ*, pl. of *rauẓah*, garden, and also "a small quantity of water remaining in a cistern"). He said: "Is it allowed that a man should make his prostration upon ordure?" He replied: "Yea, and let him avoid the dirty one" (*'aẓirah*, human excrement, and also "a courtyard"). He said: "Is it then permitted to make prostration upon [the wood of] a Khilâf [-tree]?" He replied: "Nay, nor either on the edges of his garments" (*khilâf*, the *ṣafṣâf* or poplar-tree, on which prostration is not forbidden, and also "sleeve," on which a man is not allowed to make his prostration, as little as on his *aṭrâf*, in the sense of edges of a garment

in the text, while if the word is taken in the meaning of "extremities of the body, hands, and feet," the prostration upon them is in accordance with the tradition: "I was commanded to prostrate myself on seven bones," namely, the two feet, the two knees, the two fore-arms, and the forehead). He said: "What then if he make prostration on his left?" He replied: "There is no harm in his doing so" (*shimâl*, the left side, and also pl. of *shimlah*, "cloak enveloping the whole body"). He said: "Is it then allowed to make prostration on trotters?" He replied: "Yea, with exception of the fore-arms" (*al-kurâ'*, here translated with trotters, means that part in cattle which corresponds to the pastern of a horse, which as part of a dead animal would be considered unclean, but at the same time the word means "a projecting piece of stony ground or rock," on which prostration might take place, unless it serves to ease the fore-arms). He said: "Is it allowed that one should pray upon a dog's head?" He replied: "Yea, as well as upon all other high places" (*râs al-kalb*, dog's head, is apart from its literal meaning the name of a well-known mountain-cliff). He said: "Is it lawful for a student to carry copies of the Koran?" He replied: "Nay, nor to carry them in wrappers" (*dâris*, a student, and also "a menstruous woman"). He said: "And what sayest thou with regard to him who prays while the hair of his pubes appears?" He replied: "His prayer is lawful" (*al-'ânah*, hair round the pudenda, and also "herd of asses," in connection with which latter meaning the word *bârizah* would have to be translated in its literal meaning of coming out or sallying forth).

He said: "How then if he has said prayer while [the obligation of] a fast was on him?" He replied: "He must reiterate it, and if he has prayed a hundred days" (*ṣaum*, fasting, and also "excrement dropped by an ostrich"). He said: "But if he has carried a puppy while praying?" He replied: "It is as if he had carried beans" (*jirw*, the young of a dog, and also small cucumbers, pomegranates, or similar fruit). He said: "Is the prayer of one who carries a hernia with him sound?" He replied: "Nay, and if he had been praying on [the holy] mount Marwah" (*garwah*, a rupture, and also "the vessel from which a dog drinks"). He said: "How then if on the garment of one praying any bodily excretion has fallen?" He replied: "His prayer takes effect, and no doubt" (*najw* is a general term for anything coming out of the belly, and therefore considered ceremonially impure, but it means also "a pouring cloud," the drops of which fallen on a man would not invalidate his prayer). He said: "Is it allowed that one covered with a woman's veil should lead a man in prayer?" He replied: "Yea, and also one in armour may lead him" (*muqunna'*, one who wears the female veil *miqnâ'*, implying that women are unfit to be Imâms, and also "covered with a helmet"). He said: "But what if one has led them in whose hand there is an object of a pious donation?" He replied: "They will have to begin afresh, and if they were a thousand" (*waqf*, any object consecrated to pious purposes, and also "a bracelet of ivory or tortoise-shell," in the latter sense indicating that a wearer of such, *i.e.*, a woman, is excluded from the Imâmship). He said: "What then if one has led

them whose thigh is visible?" He replied: "His prayer and theirs is efficacious" (*fakẖizuhu bâdiyah* [a man] whose thigh is bare, and also "whose tribal division or kindred are desert Arabs." Ḥarîri remarks that some Lexicographers prefer in the latter meaning the reading *fakẖz*, instead of *fakẖiz*, for the sake of distinction). He said: "But if the hornless bullock has led them?" He replied: "Say thy prayer, and no woe betide thee" (*aṣ-ṣaur al-ajamm*, a bullock without horns, and also "a lord or prince without a spear"). He said: "Can the prayer of the witness be curtailed or shortened?" He replied: "Nay, by the Invisible, the All-seeing" (*ṣalât-ash-shâhid*, the prayer of the witness, here meaning especially the blood-witness or martyr in religious warfare, and also "the prayer of sunset," so called because it coincides with the rising of the stars, to which the name *shâhid* is given). He said: "Is it allowed for the excused to break fast in the month of Ramadân?" He replied: "It is not permitted except to little children" (*ma'zûr*, or *mu'azzar*, excused, and also "circumcised"). He said: "Is it then open to one who brings home his bride to eat therein?" He replied: "Yea, to the fill of his mouth" (*al-mu'arris*, one bringing home a bride, and also "a traveller who takes a short rest at the end of night and presently continues his journey"). He said: "But what if therein the naked break their fast?" He replied: "The authorities gainsay them not" (*al-'urât*, pl. of *'ârî*, the naked, and also irr. pl. of *muârrawin*, "seized by an ague," *'urawâ'*). He said: "And if the faster eat on entering the morning?" He replied: "This is the more circumspect and safer for him"

(*aṣbaḥ*, he has entered on the morning, and also "he has lighted a lamp, *miṣbâḥ*"). He said: "What then if he venture on eating at night?" He replied: "Let him be prepared to receive judgment" (*lail-an*, adverbial accusative, at night, and also acc. of *lail*, meaning according to Ibn Dorayd "the young of a bustard," and according to others "that of the partridge or the crane"). He said: "And how when he eats before the fair one has withdrawn from sight?" He replied: "Judgment, by Allah [The punishment of the law], is due on him" (*al-baiḍâ'*, woman, wife, and also "sun"). He said: "But if the faster provokes vomiting (by taking an emetic)?" He replied: "He has broken his fast, by Him who has made the chase lawful" (*al-kaid*, violent anger, and also "vomiting," to produce which the breaking of the fast is permitted, while the provoking of anger has nothing to do with it). He said: "Is it open to him to break the fast if the cook clings to him?" He replied: "Yea, but not the cook who dresses the food in the kitchen" (*ṭâbikh*, cook, and also "a hot fever"). He said: "What then if a woman have laughed during her fast?" He replied: "The fasting of that day is invalidated for her" (*ẓaḥikat*, she laughed, and also "she became menstruous," as in Koran, xi. 74: "and she became menstruous and we announced Isaac to her"). He said: "But if smallpox appears on her fellow-wife?" He replied: "Let her break the fast, if she has made known her ailment" (*ẓarrah*, a fellow or rival wife, whose sickness would not dispense the former from fasting, and also "the root of the thumb or of the teat," which is understood in Abû Zayd's answer). He said: "What is due in

legal alms (*zakât*) for a hundred lamps?" He replied: "Two full-grown mature she-camels, O my friend" (*miṣbâḥ*, a lamp, and also a she-camel that rises at day-break from her resting-place, to go to the pasturing ground). He replied: "But if one owns ten daggers?" He replied: "Let him bring out two sheep without grumbling" (*khanâjir*, pl. of *khanjar*, a dagger, or long knife, and also of *khanjar*, or *khanjûr*, "a camel rich in milk"). He said: "But if he give over to the slanderer (informer) the best of his kindred?" He replied: "Ay, happy tidings to him on the day of resurrection" (*namîmah*, the foremost of one's relations, and also "the choicest part of one's property"; *sâʿî*, an informer, or slanderer, and also "the collector of the *zakât*"). He said: "Is it that the bearers of sins [burdens] deserve a share in the legal alms?" He replied: "Yea, if they be engaged in warfare for the faith" (*auzâr*, pl. of *wizr*, sins, burdens, and also "arms, weapons"). He said: "Is it allowed to the Ḥâjj (pilgrim) to perform the *ʿumrah* (ceremonies of the lesser pilgrimage)?" He replied: "Nay, nor that he put on a veil" (*yaʿtamir*, he performs the *ʿumrah*, and also "he puts on the *ʿimârah*," a kind of head-gear or turban). He said: "Is it then open to him to kill a brave one?" He replied: "Yea, as he may kill a wild beast" (*shujâʿ*, a valiant man, and also "a kind of serpent"). He said: "But what about him who has killed a female flutist in the Harem?" He replied: "On him is due the sacrifice of some head of cattle" (*zammârah*, a female player on the *mizmâr*, flute, or pipe, and also an ostrich, whose cry is called *zimmâr*; *ḥaram*, the harem, and also "the sacred precinct of Mecca"). He said: "But when he has

thrown [his lance] at the leg of a free man and killed him?" He replied: "Let him bring out a sheep in compensation for it" (*sâq*, a leg, *ḥurr*, a free-man; *ṣâqu ḥurrin*, "the male of the turtle-dove"). He said: "How then if he has killed the mother of 'Auf after donning the pilgrim-cloak?" He replied: "Let him give in alms a small quantity of food" (*umm 'Auf*, name of a woman by her son, and also "a locust"). He said: "Is it incumbent upon the Ḥâjj to be provided with a boat?" He replied: "Yea, so that he may lead them to the watering-places" (*qârib*, a kind of boat, and also "a seeker of water at night-time"). He said: "And what sayest thou about the lawless after the Sabbath?" He replied: "He has done what is lawful at that time" (*ḥarâm*, unlawful, opp. to *ḥalâl*, lawful, and also "one who dons the pilgrim-cloak, a pilgrim"; *sabt*, Sabbath, and also "shaving of the head"; *ḥall*, "he has doffed the cloak," which, of course, is a lawful action after the pilgrimage is completed). He said: "But what sayest thou with regard to the sale of a bay?" He replied: "It is unlawful, as the sale of a dead body" (*kumait*, a bay horse, and also "red wine"). He said: "Is it allowed to sell [barter] vinegar for the flesh of the camel?" He said: "Not either for the flesh of sheep" (*khall*, vinegar, and also a camel two years old, or the young of a pregnant camel, the sale of a living animal for flesh, whether of the same kind or any other being unlawful). He said: "Is the sale of a present lawful?" He said: "Nay, nor that of wine" (*hadiyyah*, a present, and also an animal being led to the Ka'beh for sacrifice; *sabiyyah*, a female slave taken from the infidels, and also "wine"). He said: "What sayest thou with regard

to the sale of a cornelian stone (or of the hair of a new-born)?" He said: "It is forbidden, in truth" (*'aqîqah*, a single cornelian stone; the first wool of an animal, or the hair of a new-born child; but also "an animal sacrificed for a child on the seventh day after its birth"). He said: "Is the sale of (meaning on the part of) a crier to a herd's man allowed?" He replied: "Nay, nor to a collector of the zakât" (*dâ'î*, one who calls, or makes proclamation, and also "the remainder of milk in the udder," which it is as unlawful to sell as the fœtus of an animal in the womb). He said: "May a hawk be sold for dates?" He replied: "Nay, by the Lord of creation and command" (*ṣaqar*, a hawk, and also "date-sugar"). He said: "May a Moslem buy the plunder [taken] from Moslem women?" He replied: "Yea, and it may be inherited from him, when he has died" (*salab*, plunder, booty, and also the bark of a tree, and "leaf or blade of the plant *ṣumâm*"). He said: "But is it allowed that the intercessor be sold?" He replied: "What is there to hinder it?" (*shâfi'*, an intercessor, and also "a sheep which one buys to skin it"). He said: "May a pitcher be sold to the Benû Aṣfar?" He replied: "It is abominated as the selling of a helmet [to them]" (*ibrîq*, a pitcher, and also a furbished and well-tempered sword; Benû Aṣfar are the Greeks, to whom, as enemies of Islâm, it would be unlawful to sell weapons of attack or defence). He said: "Is it lawful for a man to sell the colt of his camel born in summer?" He replied: "Nay, but he may sell his friend" (*ṣaifî*, a camel colt born in summer, and also "a son begotten in old age," to which latter meaning Abû Zayd's answer refers; *ṣafî*, a milch camel

yielding a copious flow, and also "a sincere friend," the meaning which would suggest itself most readily to the ordinary hearer). He said: "But if one has bought a slave and a wound appears on his mother?" He said: "There is no sin in returning him" (*umm*, mother, and also "the pia mater of the brain"). He said: "Holds the right of pre-emption good for the co-partner in a field?" He replied: "Nay, nor for the co-partner in a [yellow] she-camel" (*ṣaḥrâ'*, a field, and also "an ass whose white is mingled with grey; *ṣafrâ*, a yellow she-camel, a word which, however, would more readily suggest the word "bile"). He said: "Is it lawful that the water of the well and of an open place should be heated?" He replied: "If they are in deserts, then certainly not" (*yuḥmá*, it is being heated, and also "it is prohibited from general use"; *kẖalâ*, an open place, here taken in construction with *mâ'*, water, and also "fodder, both green and dry"). He said: "What sayest thou with regard to the dead body of an infidel (as an article of food)?" He replied: "It is lawful for the dweller in a place and the traveller" (*kâfir*, an infidel, and also "the sea"; *maitah*, dead body, and also "fish floating on the water"). He said: "Is it allowed to offer as a forenoon sacrifice squinting men?" He replied: "This is worthier of acceptance" (*al-ḥûl*, pl. of *aḥwal*, squint-eyed, and also of *ḥâ'il*, "a sheep that has not conceived"). He said: "May then a divorced woman be sacrificed in the forenoon?" He replied: "Yea, and the nightfarer may be treated thereto hospitably" (*aṭ-ṭâliq*, divorced woman, and also "a she-camel allowed to pasture freely"). He said: "How then if one slaughters before the appearance of the gazelle?"

He replied: "It is a sheep whose flesh may be sold (not a sacrifice) undoubtedly" (*al-ghazâlah*, gazelle, and also a name for the rising sun, corresponding to *al-jaunah*, which is a name of the sun when setting, as in the words of the poet: *tabâdara 'l-jaunatu an taghîbâ*, the sun was setting quickly). He said: "Is it lawful to make gain by beating wool (or hammering metals)?" He said: "This is like gambling with dice, there is no difference" (*ṭarq*, beating, hammering, and also "the throwing of pebbles for the purpose of vaticination"). He said: "May one standing say *salâm 'alek* to one sitting?" He replied: "It is forbidden between strangers" (*al-qâ'id*, one who sits, and also "a woman who has ceased being menstruous or copulating." He said: "May a sensible man sleep under a fool?" He said: "How lovely it is to do so in the Baqî'" (*raqî'*, a fool, and also "the sky"; *al-baqî'*, the cemetery of Medina). He said: "Is la Żimmî forbidden to kill an old woman?" He replied: "It is not allowed to oppose him with regard to wine" (*al-'ajûz*, an old woman, and also "old wine," which to kill means to mix it with water [see the Assembly of Tiflîs]). He said: "Is it allowed that a man should remove [secede] from his father's premises?" He replied: "It is not allowed either to one obscure or to a noble of birth" (*'imârah*, building, edifice, and also "tribe"). He said: "What sayest thou with regard to becoming a Jew?" He replied: "This is the key to an ascetic life" (*tahawwud*, turning a Jew, and also "turning to God in repentance," according to the words of the Koran, "behold we have returned to thee"). He said: "What sayest thou with regard to patience in mis-

fortune?" He replied: "What a great sin it is!" (*ṣabr*, patience, and also "tying, fastening, keeping one imprisoned until death ensues"; *baliyyah*, calamity, misfortune, and also "a camel tied to the tomb of her master," and neither watered nor fed until she dies, on which the deceased man was by the Arabs of the ignorance supposed to ride to his doom). He said: "Is it lawful to beat the ambassador?" He replied: "Yea, and also to load therewith the seeker of counsel" (*safîr*, envoy, ambassador, and also "leaves falling from a tree"; *mustashîr*, one who asks advice from another, and also "a fat camel," or "a camel which knows the pregnant from one that has not conceived"). He said: "May a man beat his father?" He replied: "The dutiful does so and refuseth not" (*'azzar*, he chastised, beat violently, and also "he helped, strengthened, honoured," as in Koran, xlviii. 9, "and may assist him and honour him"). He said: "What sayest thou with regard to him who has impoverished his brother?" He replied: "Well done of him, how brotherly he has acted towards him" (*afqar*, he impoverished, and also "he lent a camel to ride upon her back"). He said: "But what if he strips his child of its clothing?" He replied: "On what a handsome thing he has resolved!" (*'arâhu*, he stripped him, and also "he gave him the fruit of a date-tree for a year"). He said: "What then if he bakes his slave on the fire?" He replied: "There is no sin on him, nor any blame" (*al-mamlûk*, a white slave, and also "a dough kneaded repeatedly until it has become consistent"). He said: "Is it allowed for a woman to cut her husband?" (in the Arabic idiom meaning to be undutiful to him). He

replied: "Nobody forbids her doing so" (*ba'l*, a husband, and also "a date-tree," in which sense "cutting" may be taken literally, or in the meaning of "gathering its fruit"). He said: "May then a woman be upbraided for being bashful?" He replied: "Most certainly" (*khajal*, being bashful, blushing, and also "being overbearing in possession of riches," according to the saying of Mohammed to the women: "When ye are hungry ye fawn, and when ye have your fill ye become overbearing"). He said: "What sayest thou with regard to him who has shaved [planed] the tamarisk of his brother?" He replied: "He has sinned even if he has given permission to him" (*naḥata aṣlat-hu*, he shaved his tamarisk, and also "he backbited him and detracted from his honour"). He said: "Is it allowed to the magistrate to appoint a curator for one possessed of a bullock?" He replied: "Yea, to be safe from the mischief of violence" (*ṣaur*, a bullock, and also "madness"). He said: "But is it open to him to strike on the hand of an orphan?" He replied: "Yea, until he is of age" (*ẓaraba 'alá yadi-hi*, besides having the literal meaning given above, is an idiom for: "he appointed a curator for him"). He said: "Is it then allowed to him to take for the same (an orphan) a suburban place?" He replied: "Nay, even if he consents to it" (*rabẓ*, buildings outside the walls of a city, and also "a wife"). He said: "But when may he (the magistrate) sell the body of an idiot?" He replied: "Whenever he sees that it pleases him" (*badan*, body, and also "a short armour"). He said: "Is it then allowed that he buy for him jakes?" He replied: "Yea, if they be not haunted" (*ḥashsh*, a privy, and also "a palm-planta-

tion"). He said: "Is it allowed that the magistrate be an oppressor?" He replied: "Yea, if he be knowing" (*ẓâlim*, one who oppresses, and also "one who drinks milk before it curdles"). He said: "Is one fit to become a Kadi who has no perspicacity?" He replied: "Yea, if his conduct be fair" (*baṣîrah*, sharpsightedness, sagacity, and also "a shield"). He said: "But if he is bare of intellect?" He replied: "This is an indication [the title-page] of excellence" (*'aql*, intellect, wisdom, and also "embroidered silk stuff"). He said: "But if he have the pride of a tyrant?" He replied: "There is nothing to be said against or to make much of" (*zahw*, pride, and also "a date which begins to colour"; *jabbâr*, a tyrant. a shedder of blood, and also "a high palm-tree whose fruit is out of the reach of the hand," opposed to *qâ'id*). He said: "Is it allowed that the witness be a suspected character?" He replied: "Yea, if he be a sensible man" (*murîb*, suspected, exposed to doubt, and also "one who has plenty of curdled milk"). He said: "But when it has transpired that he has committed sodomy?" He replied: "He is like one who has tailored" (*lâṭ*, he committed the sin of the people of Lot, and also "he coated a well with clay"). He said: "And if it comes out that he has been winnowing?" He replied: "Let his evidence be refused, and not accepted" (*gharbal*, he sifted corn, and also "he killed," as the poet says in the metre rejez: "Thou wilt see the kings slain around him." The word has also an obscene meaning). He said: "But if it has become manifest that he is a liar?" He replied: "That is for him a quality which adorns him" (*mân, yamîn*, he lied, and also, with aor. *yamûn*,

"he provided for his family"). He said: "What is incumbent upon a servant of God?" He replied: "Let him make oath by the God of creation" (*ʿâbid al-ḥaqq*, a servant of God, and also "one who gainsays the true belief," as some commentators explain the word in Koran, xliii. 81). He said: "And what sayest thou with regard to him who has deliberately gouged the eye of a nightingale?" "Let his eye be gouged, to make the speech short" (*bulbul*, a nightingale, and also "a spare man"). He said: "But if he has wounded the Ḳaṭa (bird) of a woman and death ensued?" He said: "Soul for soul, if it has gone" (*qaṭa'*, sandgrouse, and also "what lies between the hip-bones"). He said: "But if a pregnant woman has dropped her fœtus in consequence of his blow?" He replied: "Let him atone for his sin by the manumission of a slave" (*ḥashîsh*, grass, green herbs, etc., and also "a fœtus dropped in abortion"). He said: "What is due in law to one who keeps himself secluded?" He replied: "To have his extremities cut off for the sake of determent" (*mukhtafî*, one who sticks to a place without leaving it, and also "a spoiler of tombs, a stripper of grave-clothes"). He said: "What then is to be done to him who has stolen the snakes of the house?" He replied: "Let his right hand be cut off, if they are worth the fourth part of a denar" (*asâwid*, pl. of *aswad*, snakes, and also "household utensils, as a washing-tub, kettle, dish," etc.). He said: "But if he have stolen a great worth [value] of gold?" He replied: "There is no amputation as though he had committed a violent robbery" (*ṣamîn*, what is precious, valuable, and also "the eighth part," as *naṣîf* is used for *niṣf*, half, *sadîs*

for *suds*, sixth part, etc. ; under gold is in this case to be understood a gold coin). He said : " What then if theft is brought home to a woman ?" He replied : " There is no guilt upon her, and she has nothing to fear " (*saraq*, theft, and also " white silk "). He said : " Is a marriage contract valid, which is not witnessed by starlings ?" He replied : " Nay, by the Creator, the Maker " (*qawârî*, pl. of *qâriyah*, a bird of the starling kind, from which the Arabs take a lucky augury, especially with regard to rain, and also " witnesses," because they follow up matters, from *qará*, he followed up). He said : " What sayest thou with regard to a bride who has passed the first night of a month, and then has been returned early in the morning to her previous state ?" He replied : " Half of the dowry is due to her, and the days of probation for divorce (*'iddah*) are not incumbent on her " (*lailah ḥurrah*, the first night of a month, and also " a wedding night in which no consummation has taken place "). Then the asker of the questions said to him : " Allah has blessed thee with the fulness of a sea that he who draws from it lessens it not, and of a man of learning to whose praise the praiser reaches not." Thereupon he looked down with the downward look of the abashed, and stopped silent with the silence of the tongue-tied. Said to him Abû Zayd : " Go on, Sirrah, how long then [wilt thou tarry], how long ?" He replied : " There remains no missile in my quiver, and after the breaking forth of thy morn there is no scope left for debate : by Allah then, the son of what country art thou, and how beautiful was that which thou hast

expounded." Forthwith he indited with a glib tongue and a powerful voice :

"In the world I am a pattern, point of sight [Ḳiblah] for folk of wisdom,
Save that all my days I pass in tardy rest and early outset,
And the stranger, though in Eden he alight, is like one homeless."

Then he said : "O Allah, as Thou hast made us of the number of those who are guided so that they may guide others, make us also of the number of those who follow the right way and spend." Thereupon the people brought him a drove of camels together with a singing girl, and begged him to visit them while after while. Then he rose to go, making them longing for his return, and carrying off the slave-girl and the drove. Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm : Thereupon I accosted him, and said : "I know thee a rogue, since when then hast thou become a legist ?" He kept twisting about a little while and then he indited, saying :

"I alter my coat to the whims of each moment and mix with its changes of welfare and ill-fare,
And pledge my companion in converse with all that may flatter his humour to please my companion,
With tellers of tales circulating narrations, with drinkers of wine circulating the goblets.
Now making the tears by my sermon to pour down, now cheering the hearts by my jocular sallies,
And feasting the ears, if but op'ning my mouth, by spell of my speech that will meeken the restive,
And if I am minded my hand makes the pen drop a shower of pearls to adorn many volumes.
How many a subtlety dim as Soha that came to be bright as a sun by my clearing,
How many my sayings that captivate hearts, and leave in the hearer a yearning behind them,
And virgin Ḳaṣîdehs indited by me, that met with applause loud expressed and enduring.

Yet plotting of fortune has singled me out, a plotting surpassing that Tir'aun's 'gainst Moses,

And kindles against me a war day by day, I tread through its blaze on a furnace, a furnace!

And strikes me with ills, such as melt a man's vigour, and blanch people's heads with the whiteness of hoar-frost.

And brings to me near but the alien, the hateful, while banishing from me the nearest, the dearest!

And were it not but for the vileness of fortune my lot in the world were not vile, by its fell feud."

Then I said to him: "Soothe thy sorrows and blame not fortune, but be thankful to Him who has turned thee from the way of Iblîs to the way of Idrîs" (Ash-Shâfi'î). He replied: "Leave off idle talk, and tear no veils, but rise with us to make for the Masjid of Yathrib (Medina), haply we may cleanse away by the visitation the filth of our sins." So I said: "Far be it that I fare with thee, before I learn thy explanation." He replied: "By Allah, thou hast imposed duties upon me, and when thou hast asked, thou hast asked but a small matter; listen then to what remedies the mind, and removes ambiguity." Then after he had made clear to me the enigmatical and lifted from me my perplexity, we tightened our saddles, and I fared on, and he fared on, while he ceased not from his nightly talk as long as the journey lasted, on such topics that made me forget hardship and I would have liked with him "the distance to be long" (allusion to Koran, ix. 42, "but the distance seemed long to them," referring to those who were called upon to join in the expedition to Tâbûk), until when we had reached the city of the Prophet, and obtained our desire from the visitation, he set out Syriawards, and I towards 'Irâk, he veered to the West, and I to the East.

THE THIRTY-THIRD ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF TIFLIS."

In this Assembly Abû Zayd presents himself in the guise of a mendicant, afflicted with a paralytical contortion of the face, before a congregation in Tiflis, whom Ḥârith had joined in the performance of the appointed prayers, and he obtains by an eloquent appeal to their commiseration, in rhymed prose and verse, a liberal supply of alms from the captivated audience. Ḥârith follows him, when he departs with his prey, and after having reached a secluded spot, Abû Zayd laughingly throws off his palsy and reveals his identity, anticipating the rebukes of his indignant friend with his usual frank avowal, that his necessity makes for him the law, if lawful means will not provide for his necessity. Yielding to the spell of his fascinating personality, Ḥârith accompanies him in his travels during two years, after the lapse of which he regrets that circumstances enforced their separation.

I had covenanted with Allah, be He exalted, since I was of the age of about a score, that I would not delay prayer as far as it was in my power, so that with my roaming in deserts, and in spite of the sport of leisure-hours, I kept the stated times of prayer and guarded myself from the sin of letting them slip by, and when I joined in a journey, and alighted in any place, I welcomed the summoner to it, and took pattern from him, who observed it religiously. Now it happened at a time when I had come to Tiflis, that I prayed together with a number of poorly-off people, and when we had finished prayer, and were about to go, there sallied forth an old man, with a face plainly contorted by palsy, worn of garments and strength, who said: "I conjure him, who has been made of the clay of liberality, and suckled of the milk of good fellowship, that he but spare me a moment's hurrying, and listen

to a few words from me, whereafter the choice belongs to him, and it rests with his hand to spend or refuse." Then the people fastened their hoops to him [locked their knees together to him], and sat still like the hillocks. Now when he perceived how nicely they kept silent and how considerate they showed themselves in their demeanour [deportment] he said: "O ye, endowed with eyes clear of sight, and visions bright of perception, does not eye-witnessing dispense with hearsay? and does not the smoke tell of the fire? Hoariness is apparent, and weakness oppressive, and disease manifest, and the inward state thus laid bare. Yet erewhile I was one of those who possess and bestow, who exercise authority and rule, who grant help and gifts, who assist and assault. But calamities ceased not to subvert, nor vicissitudes to take away scrap by scrap, till the nest was despoiled and the palm empty, privation became my raiment and bitterness my life-stay, my little ones whined from hunger and craved for the sucking of a date-stone. Yet withal I came not to stand in this place of ignominy and to disclose to you things [to be] hidden, but after I had suffered and was palsy-stricken, and had waxed grey from all I met with, and, oh! would that I had not been spared!" Then he sighed the sigh of the sorrowful, and indited with a feeble voice:

"I cry to the Compassionate, be praise to Him, for fortune's fickleness and hostile rancour

And for calamities that have shattered my rock, and overthrown my frame and its foundations,

Have broken down my stem, and woe to him, whose boughs adversities pull down and break.

My dwelling they have wasted even as to banish from the wasted spot the rats themselves;

They left me bewildered and dazed, to bear the brunt of poverty and all its pangs,

While heretofore I was a lord of wealth, who trailed his sleeves along in luxury,

Whose leaves the supplicants beat freely down, whose hospitable fires night-farers praised;

But who is now, as though the world, that casts the evil eye on him, had never smiled on him,

From whom he turns who was his visitor, and whom he scorns to know who sought his gift.

So if a good man mourns the evil plight he sees an old man in, betrayed by fortune,

Then let him ease the sorrow that afflicts him, and mend the state that puts him thus to shame."

Said the narrator: Now the company inclined to ascertain his condition, so as to find out what he might have concealed, and to sift the truth of his affair. So they said to him: "We know by this time the excellence of thy degree, and the abundance of thy rain-cloud, but make now known to us the tree of thy branch, and withdraw the veil from thy descent." Then he showed himself averse with the reluctancy of one whom misfortunes have befallen or to whom the tidings of daughters [born to him] have been brought, and he indited with emphatic utterance, although in a low voice:

"By thy life, I assure thee, not showeth the branch by the zest of its fruit from what root it has sprung,

So eat what is sweet, when it cometh to hand, and ask not the honey where swarmeth the bee!

And learn to discern, when thou pressest thy grapes, the must of thy press from the acid it yields,

That by testing thou value the costly and cheap, to buy and to sell all things by their likes;

For blame would accrue to the witty, the wise, if error of judgment were fastened on him."

Then the people were roused by his sagacity and subtleness, and beguiled by the beauty of his delivery, along with his disease, so that they collected for him the hidden treasures of their belts and whatever was secreted in their breast-pockets, saying to him: "Thou hast drifted to a shallow well and repaired to an empty hive; so take this trifle [pittance] and reckon it neither a miss nor a hit." Then he made much of their little, and accompanied its acceptance with thanks, whereupon he turned away, dragging half his body, and made off, stumbling on his road. Said the narrator of this tale: Now the fancy struck me, that he had disguised his appearance, and shammed in his gait, so I rose to thread his path and to track his traces, while he glanced at me askance and gave me a wide berth, until, when the road was clear and identification [the disclosure of the truth] became possible, he looked at me with the look of him who is friendly and glad of the meeting, and shows his true colours, after he had dissembled, saying to me: "I imagine thou art a brother of peregrination, and looking out for companionship. Wouldst thou then fain have a mate who is kind to thee and helps thee, and is indulgent with thee and shares in thy expenses?" Said I to him: "If such a mate came forward, providence, indeed, would favour me." He replied: "Thou hast found, so rejoice, and hast encountered the generous, so cleave to him." Then he had a long laugh, and stood before me, a sound man, when lo! it was our Shaykh of Serûj, with no ailment in his body, and nothing doubtful in his outward tokens. Then I rejoiced at meeting with him, and at the feignedness of his palsy, and bethought me of

rebuking him for the evilness of his ways, but he opened his mouth and indited before I could chide him:

"I show me in rags, so that people may say, a wretch that forbears with the hardships of times.

I feign to the world to be palsied of face, for often my heart thus obtaineth its wish;

Ay, but for my raggedness find I compassion, and but for the palsy I meet with my wants."

Thereupon he said: "No pasture is left me in these parts, nor anything to be hoped for from their people, and if thou wilt be my mate, on our way with us, on our way!" So we fared forth from the place, we twain by ourselves, and I kept company with him for full two years, nay, I would fain have associated with him while my life lasts, but time, the disperser, forbade me.

THE THIRTY-FOURTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF ZABÎD."

In this Assembly Abû Zayd appears in the character of a slave-merchant. Ḥârith, while travelling in Yemen, had lost by death in the city of Zabîd a faithful servant, whom he found it difficult to replace. After having commissioned in vain the merchants of the town, to find him a substitute, he repairs himself to the market, where a man, muffled up in a Liṣâm or face-veil offers to him for sale a youth, whose good qualities he praises in some spirited verses. Ḥârith is struck by the boy's beauty, which ominously reminds him of Joseph, whose comeliness had made the Egyptian ladies compare him to an angel. He asks the boy for his name, but receives no answer, and only after he has shown his vexation at this, the youth, less in obedience to his intended purchaser's wish, than to impart to him a derisive warning, emphatically says: "I am Joseph, I am Joseph," implying thereby that his case is identical with that of the patriarch, and that he, as free-born, could as little be sold lawfully as Joseph was by his brothers. The hint, however, is lost on Ḥârith, who eagerly concludes the bargain, but, after the merchant is gone, soon finds out his mistake. For the boy, now openly claiming his freedom, appeals to the Kadi of the place, who con-

firms his statement, by mentioning, that only the day before his father had given in court a declaration to that effect. On further inquiry, Hârith learns with dismay that the father's name is Abû Zayd, and he forswears all future intercourse with the wily Shaykh, until this one meets him in a narrow road, and again charms him into more friendly feelings, although this last experience of the other's unscrupulous proceedings still rankles in his mind.

Al Hârith, son of Hammâm, related : When I crossed the deserts as far as Zabîd, I had with me a slave, whom I had reared up to his full age, and trained until he had perfected his right conduct, and he was fully familiar with my ways, and knew how to draw forth my goodwill, so as not to over-step my intentions, nor to be remiss in [carrying out] my wishes. Therefore needs his good services had won him my heart, and I singled him out [as my companion] in my stay and travel. But pernicious fate made away with him when we had reached Zabîd, and when "the sole of his foot was turned up," and his voice had waxed still, I was a year without relishing my food, or looking out for another servant, until the various inconveniences of solitary life, and the troubles of getting up and sitting down drove me to take the bead instead of the pearl, and to hunt for one who might be a stopgap for my needs. So I repaired to the slave-sellers in the market of Zabîd, when I said : "I want a lad who gives satisfaction when he is probed [tried] and who is approved when he is tested, and let him be one of those whom the intelligent have brought out, and poverty alone has thrown into the market." Then every one of them bestirred himself for the object of my search, and bustled about and exerted himself to encompass it speedily. Thereupon the new moons completed their round, and turned in

their increase and wane, but there came to pass [the fulfilment of] none of their promises, and no thunder-cloud yielded rain in response thereto. Now when I saw that the slave-merchants had either forgotten or pretended to forget, I knew that not everyone who undertakes a work carries it through, and that naught will scratch my skin as well as my own nail, so I abandoned the way of commissioning and sallied forth to the market with the yellow and the white ones, and had the slave-boys led past me, inquiring for the prices, when, lo! there accosted me a man who had the face-veil drawn over his nostrils, and who held a boy by his fore-arm, saying :

"Who buys from me a lad who proves deft at his work, and is in make and manners surpassingly fair ?

Equal to any task thou mayest lay upon him, who speeds thee when he speaks, and spoken to attends ;

Who if thou stumble says to thee : 'Rise to thy feet,' and if thou bid him : 'Enter the fire,' he enters it.

Who when thou wilt, if but a day, associates thee, and is contented but with a scrap, if such thy wish.

Although he have his wits collected, when he talks, he neither tells a lie nor claims more than his due.

He yields not to the call of any wish of his, nor lets a secret, trusted with him, get out of keep.

And oftentimes he makes one wonder at his skill, excelling both in prose and verse-stringing alike,

And were it not, by God, for life's straitening stress, and little ones that sadly want clothing and food :

I would not sell him for the realms that Kisra rules."

Now when I looked at his straight build and his exquisite beauty, I fancied him one of the youths of the garden of delight (Paradise), and quoth : "This is not a man, but for sooth an honoured angel." Then I wished him to enounce his name, not from a desire to

know it, but to see whether his elocution matched his comeliness and how his utterance responded to the fairness of his countenance. But he spoke not either sweet or bitter, and uttered not a sound of the son of slave-woman or a woman of free birth. So I turned aside from him and said: "Out upon thy impediment and be gone!" Then he burst out in laughter and shook with it, whereupon he nodded his head to me, and indited:

"O thou, whose wrath is kindled if I withhold my name, not thus a man, who in his dealings shows him fair!
But if thou be not pleased unless it be revealed, then listen: Joseph I am, am Joseph, hear!
Now have I lifted to thee the veil and if thy wits are sharp, thou knowest, but I fancy thou knowest not."

Then he allayed my anger by his poetry, and captivated my heart by his sorcery, so that I was too bewildered to perceive the truth, and made oblivious of the story of Joseph the faithful, and I concerned myself only with asking his master's charge for him, and inquiring after the amount of his price, so that I might pay it in full. Now I thought he would look askance at me and demand from me a high sum, but he did not soar whither I had soared, nor held he on to that to which I held on, nay, on the contrary he said: "Here is the boy! if the price is low, and his keep but slight, his master thinks himself blessed in him and loves him all the better for it, and I wish above all to make thee fond of the lad by lightening to thee the price for him; so weigh out two hundred dirhems if thou wilt, and be thankful to me as long as thou livest." So I paid him the amount at once, as the lawful price is paid in a cheap bargain, and it occurred not to my mind, that

everyone who sells cheap, makes one pay dear. Now when the transaction was concluded, and separation was impending, both eyes of the lad brimmed over with tears, though they were not the bloody tears of grief; then he stepped up to his master, and said:

"Allah confound thee! is it right to sell one such as me to fill the hungry bellies,

And is it walking in the path of justice, to make me bear what cannot be endured?

To try me sore with terror after terror, though one like me, if tried, cannot be frightened?

Yet hast thou probed me and experienced from me good counsels, unalloyed with any falsehood.

How often hast thou set me as a net for game, and I brought home prey captured in my snares;

And hast imposed on me tasks difficult that were obeyed, though I might have refused them.

How many a battle that I had to fight in, how many a booty, and I had no share.

And never, all my days, did I a sin, which, if thou break'st with me, could be revealed [unveiled],

Nor couldst thou stumble on a fault of mine, praise be to God, to hide it, or proclaim it.

How canst thou cast me off then so light-heartedly, as skilful women cast away their shreds?

And why allows thy soul thee to enslave me, and offer me for sale as goods are sold?

Wouldst thou not shield my honour, as I shield thy own concerns the day when parting grieves us,

And say to him who bartered for me: 'This is Sakâbi, neither to buy nor borrow'?

Now, I am not, for sooth, below that horse, but far above thy nature is their nature

And boldly sing I out: trading on me, my worth was lost to them, and what a worth!"

When the old man had understood his couplets and taken in [the meaning of] his ditty, he fetched a deep sigh and wept so as to make weep the far away, and said to me: "I hold this lad in the place of my son, and

distinguish him not from the lobes of my liver, and were it not for the emptiness of my abode and the extinction of my lamp, he would not go out of my nest till he escorted my bier. Now thou hast seen what has come to him of the pangs of separation, and the believer is kind and gentle. So wouldst thou have a mind, for the soothing of his heart, and the removal of his grief, to stipulate with me for the cancelling of his sale, whenever I asked for it, and not to find me importune if I should press for the same, for it is amongst the choice traditions transmitted by the trustworthy, that 'he who grants redemption to one repenting of his bargain, Allah remits to him his transgressions.'" Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Thereupon I made to him a promise, prompted by shame, but within my heart I thought otherwise. Then he bade the boy to approach him, and kissed him between both his eyes, inditing, while the tears were coursing from his lids:

"Bear patiently, my soul may be thy ransom, what thou hast met of sorrow and of anguish,
May not for long the time of parting last, nor flag the beasts that bring us to reunion;
Through aid of God, the Mighty, the Creator."

Then he said to him: "I commend thee to the keeping of one who is a good master," and tucked up his skirt and turned away. But the lad remained sobbing and wailing until the other might have gone the length of a mile, and when he had recovered himself and stopped the flow of his tears, he said: "Dost thou know for what I have wailed and what has been my object therein?" I said: "It is, I trow, the separation from thy master which has made thee weep." Said he:

"Thou art in one valley, and I am in another, and what a distance there is between a wisher and his wish." Then he indited:

"By Allah, weeping was I not for friend departed, nor eke for loss of any pleasure or delight,
But tears were flowing from my eyelids for a fool, whose eyes, though opened wide, led into pitfalls him,
So that he came to grief and was sadly disgraced, and lost his white engraven ones, his lustrous coin.
Woe thee, have not those subtle words warned thee enough, that I was free, and hence not lawful was my sale?
For clear as daylight should it be what Joseph meant."

Now I looked at his speech as a thing seen in the mirror of one who jests, or the exhibition of one indulging in pleasantry, but he waxed obstinate [restive] with the obstinacy [restiveness] of one who claims a right, and protested not to be tainted with the clay of servile condition; so we jostled about in an altercation which terminated in fisticuffs and led to an appeal to the judge. When we had explained the case to the Kadi, and read to him our Sura, he said: "Indeed, he who has warned has excused himself, he who has put one on his guard is like one who has given information, he who has made one see the state of affairs, has done no damage. Now what you both have said in explanation, demonstrates that this lad has tried to rouse thee, but thou wouldst not be awaked, and has advised thee, but thou wouldst not understand; therefore veil the ailment of thy stupidity and hide it, and blame thyself, but blame not him; beware to lay hold on him, and to wish to make him thy slave, for he is free of body, and not subject to be exposed for sale. It was only yesterday that his father brought him into

my presence, a little while before sunset, declaring him to be his branch that he had grown, and that he had no heir but him." Then I said to the Kadi: "And knowest thou his father? may Allah put him to shame!" He replied: "How should Abû Zayd be unknown for whose wound there is no retaliation, and of whom every Kadi has stories to tell and proclamation to make." Then I gnashed my teeth in anger and said, "There is no power and no strength, but in Allah, the Exalted, the Great," becoming wide awake, but when the time had slipped, and making sure that his face-veil was a net of his cunning, and the crowning couplet of his poem. So my mishap made me cast down my looks, and I swore that I would never again deal with the bearer of a face-veil as long as I lived, bewailing all the while my losing bargain, and the shame to which I should be put amongst my comrades. Then the Kadi said to me, when he saw my distress and became clearly aware of the brunt of my burning grief: "Ay such a one, thy loss has given thee a lesson, and he who has roused [awakened] thy wits, has not done thee an injury; take then warning by thy adventure and conceal from thy friends what has befallen thee; remember always what has occurred to thee, so as to keep in mind the admonition which thy money has administered thee and mould thyself after the disposition of one who has been tried and shown patience and who has profited by the examples set before him." Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Thereupon I took leave from him, donning the raiment of shame and sorrow and trailing my skirt of defrauded folly, and I purposed to show Abû Zayd my aversion by shunning him, and to cut him for the

remainder of my life, deliberately keeping aloof from his abode, and avoiding to see him, until he came upon me in a narrow path, and welcomed me with the welcome of an affectionate friend, though all I did was to frown at him and keep silent. Then he said: "What ails thee that thou turnest up thy nose at thy mate?" Answered I: "Hast thou forgotten that thou hast plotted against me, and cheated me, and done the thing which thou hast done?" Then he puffed his cheek and cracked it at me in derision, after which he indited appeasingly:

"O thou who show'st estrangement and curl'st up thy brow in savage scowl,
And featherest the shafts of blame that hit as hard, nay, harder, than arrows sharp
And sayest who sells a free-born man, as a nigger is sold or a dusky nag,
Cut short thy say, and know I am not the first therein as thou seem'st to think:
Heretofore the tribes sold Joseph, though they were what people know they were.
So it is; and by the holy house that in Tihâmeh is visited
And those who circumambulate it, emaciated, with ashen locks,
Not had I stood in this place of shame, I swear it, if I owned a coin.
So excuse thy brother, and bother not with the blame of one who ignores the facts."

Thereupon he said: "My excuse is plain and thy dirhems are gone. But if thy shrinking from me and thy aversion towards me arises from the excess of thy tender concern for the remainder of thy pelf, I am not of those who sting twice and make one tread upon two cinders, and if thou art cross and givest way to thy stinginess, in order to escape the bait that hangs in my nets, the mourning-women will weep over thy wits."

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: So he deluded me by his deceitful utterance and his powerful sorcery into turning his friend and becoming attached to him again, flinging the remembrance of his exploit behind me, though it was an abominable thing.

THE THIRTY-FIFTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF SHIRAZ."

This composition is in the style of the eighth and the earlier part of the twenty-ninth Assembly. Abû Zayd describes, in a company of distinguished men of literary tastes in Shiraz, where Ḥârith has met them, a wine-cask metaphorically under the simile of a maiden, for whom, as he tells the people, he desires to purchase wedding attire. They give him money, and it turns out that by the wedding attire is meant a flagon and a cup, which were necessary to wed as it were the wine-cask to the drinker. The allegory may have been suggested by the circumstance that the scene of the event is Shiraz, a city celebrated for its wine, or rather for the manufacture of a peculiar kind of wine-flagons, which on account of their exquisite workmanship are used in preference to others for presenting in them wines of superior quality.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, narrated: In my roamings I met in Shiraz with an Assembly, who invited the passer-by to stay, even if he should be in haste, and I was unable to tear myself away from them, and my foot would not move to step past them, for I inclined to them, so that I might test their intrinsic worth and see how their fruit would be from their blossom. Now they proved to be select people, and he who inclined to them was profited, and while we were engaged in talk pleasanter than the songs of birds and more delightful than the milk of grapes, there entered our midst a man in two tattered pieces of clothing who had wellnigh reached the two terms of life. He greeted us with a

glib tongue, and expressed himself in the delivery of the eloquent ; then he sat down as one joining in the assembly, with his hands round his knees, and said : "O Allah, let us be of the rightly guided." Now the people made little of him, on account of his ragged attire, forgetting that they would have to reckon with the two things smallest in him (his tongue and heart), and they began to bandy between them the chapter of rhetoric, counting its aloës as common wood, but he vouchsafed not a word, nor declared himself by any sign until he had probed their intellectual powers, and knew who of them made rise the scale and who weighed it down. But when he had brought to light their buried treasures and exhausted their quivers, he said: "O ye people, if you had known that behind the plug there is pure wine you would not have slighted a bearer of tattered garments, but asked what parts he possesses." Then he let flow of the springs of learning, and of choice sayings that whereby he drew forth marvels of wonderment and which was worthy to be written in fluid gold ; and when he had captivated all their senses, and made every heart turn to him, he stirred for taking his departure, and made ready to go. But the company clung to him and barred the course of his progress, saying : "We have just seen the sign of thy arrow, now make known to us the shell of thy egg and its yolk." Then he was silent with the silence of one choked by tears, whereupon he wailed so that he was pitied by all. Said the narrator : Now when I saw the mixture and tinge of Abû Zayd, and his wonted ways and manners of proceeding, I looked hard at the old man, with all his defacement of countenance and ful-

someness, and lo! it was he himself. But I concealed his secret, as an internal disease is concealed, and veiled his cunning scheme, although he did not think so, until when he ceased wailing, he blinked at me with an eye full of laughter, whereupon he began to indite with the tongue of one who shams tearfulness:

"I crave Allah's forgiveness, humbling myself, for all the sins whose heavy load burdens me.

O folks, how many olden maids kept at home, though in assemblies were their virtues praised about

Have I cut down not fearing from any heir that might revenge them on me or claim a fine.

And when the sin thereof was laid at my door, I boldly cleared myself and said: fate it was.

And never stopped my soul its headlong career in cutting damsels down, and kept going stray,

Till hoariness shone on the crown of my head and checked me from performing such evil deeds.

So since my temples have turned grey never shed I any more a maiden's blood, old or young,

But now I rear, in spite of what may be seen of my condition and of my slacking trade,

A lass who for a long time has stayed at home, sheltered and veiled carefully from air itself.

And she in spite of being thus kept recluse, has wooers for her comeliness and pleasingness.

But for her outfit, at the least, I can't do without a hundred, though I try as I may,

While in my hand there is not one silver coin, the ground is empty and the sky yields no rain.

Now is one here to help me that I may wed her amidst the singing-girls' cheering strain,

Then let him wash my grief with its proper soap and cleanse my heart from sorrows that worry me,

That he may cull my praises, whose fragrancy will only cease to breathe when man prays in vain."

Said the narrator: Then there was none left in the company but his palm opened to him and his kindness reached him, and when his wish had proved successful

and his hundred was completed, he praised them as beseems the upright, and tucked up his skirt for departure. But I followed him, wishing to learn who was the foster-daughter of his chamber and whom he had cut down in his early life, and it was as if the swiftness of my rising had made him aware of my intention, for he approached me and said: "Hearken to me,

"'Cutting down' means with one like me 'thinning the wine' not, O friend, with the lance or sword killing a man.

And the maid, kept at home with me, means the daughter of the grape-tree, not virgin of high descent [extraction].

And to wed her to cup and flask was the errand, which thou saw'st me intent upon when I joined you.

Understand then what I have said, and decide on kind forbearance, if so thy will, or rebuking."

Then he said: "I am quarrelsome and thou art faint-hearted, so there is a wide gulf between us." Thereupon he bade me farewell, and went away, making me send after him more than one glance of loving affection.

THE THIRTY-SIXTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF MALTÎYAH."

In this Assembly Abû Zayd proposes twenty riddles or conundrums of a particular kind, and all of the same form, which consists in finding a word resembling a given short sentence in such a manner, that its component parts are synonymous with the members of the phrase in question. The introduction to the Assembly itself adduces as an instance the query, what is like *an-naum fât*, Sleep has departed, to which the answer would be *al-karâmât*, pl. of *karâmah* in the sense of "wonder," "miracle," because the initial part of the word, *al-karâ*, means "slumber," and the final syllable, *mât*, signifies "is dead." The English reader of this translation will not be worse off than Abû Zayd's Arabic audience, for the author gives no solution in the body of the Assembly, leaving its discovery to the ingenuity of the listener, but if his curiosity and interest

are roused by the quaint form of the questions and the lively style in which they are introduced, he will find at the cost of small trouble amusement as well as linguistic instruction in the short commentary, which Ḥarîri himself has attached to this composition.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I made my camel of foreign travel kneel down at Maltîyah, and my pouch was at that time well filled with coin. So I made it my wont, when I had deposed there my staff, to frequent the places of entertainment and to hunt after rare pleasures, so that nothing escaped me worthy to be seen or heard, and no play-ground or resort of enjoyment was left unvisited by me, until, when I had no further business there, and no desire for longer stay, I resolved to expend my remaining gold in buying travelling gear. Now when I had completed my preparations, and was ready for departure, or all but ready, I saw a group of nine people, who had purchased some wine, wherewith they had ascended a hillock, and their winning manners captivated men's eyes, while their pleasantry was sweet-spoken. Therefore I wended towards them from a wish to join in their conversation, not in their drinking-bout, and from eagerness to mix with them, not to taste the contents of their tumblers. Now when I had become the tenth in their string, and a companion in their forenoon meeting, I found them to be a medley assemblage thrown together from the deserts, though the woof of literary culture united them as with the union of relationship, and matched them in their ranks, so that they shone like the luminaries of the Twins, and appeared as a community whose members are of one kindred. So I rejoiced at having been guided to them, and praised the lucky star

that had made me light upon them, beginning to shake my arrow together with their arrows, and to solace myself with the perfume of their refinement, not with that of their wine, until the branch-roads of discussion led us to the proposing of riddles, as if thou sayst, intending thereby *al-karâmat*, what is like "*al-naum fât*" (sleep has departed), which may be expressed by "*al-karâ mât*" (slumber is dead), whereupon we began to display both Sohá (the smallest star in the Bear) and the moon, and to cull both the thorn and the fruit, and while we were spreading out the fresh and the old, and drawing from [fishing out of] the pot the fat and the lean, an old man intruded upon us, whose bloom of complexion and beauty of form had gone, while knowledge and experience remained with him. Then he stood as one who listens and observes, picking up what we were scattering, until the purses were empty and it became obvious that no more was to be hoped for. Now when he saw the flagging of their powers [faculties], and that both he who drew water from the top of the well, and he who drew it from the bottom, were equally baffled, he gathered his skirts together, and turned his back on us, saying: "Not everything black is a date, nor is everything ruddy wine." Then we clung to him as the chameleon clings to the trees, and blocked his progress as with bars, saying to him: "The cure of a rent is to stitch it, and if not, then retaliation! retaliation! So hope not to wound while thou art safe, and to make bleed the gash while thou goest scot-free." Then he turned his bridle, sitting down in his place for a good stay, and said: "Since you have challenged me to discussion, I shall

give the judgment of Solomon in the matter of the sown field. Know, ye owners of literary accomplishments and golden coloured wine, that the proposing of riddles is for the purpose of testing the quickness of wit and bringing out its hidden treasures, under the condition, that they are founded on a real resemblance and contain meaning words, and some scholarly nicety. For if they are of a style different from this they are refuse [worthless], and not to be put into the casket [as something worthy to be preserved], and I noticed that your definitions kept not within these limits, and distinguished not between the acceptable and the objectionable." We said to him: "Thou art right, and hast spoken the truth. But measure out to us somewhat from thy select store, and pour upon us from thy main sea" [ocean]. Said he: "I will do so in a manner that those who failed may not doubt, nor look at me with suspicion." Then he turned to the foremost of the people, and said:

1. "O thou who excels in sharpness, who strikes the fire-sticks of merit,
What is it that likens saying: 'hunger is cheered by provisions'?"

Then he smiled to the second, and indited:

2. "O man of surpassing honour, unsullied by any baseness,
What is as if one in riddling would say: 'a back looked askance at'?"

Then he glanced at the third, saying:

3. "O thou, the children of whose thought resemble coin of ready course,
What is like saying to a man thou pliest with riddles: 'he met a gift'?"

Then he stretched his neck towards the fourth, and said:

4. "O thou who solvest what is intricate of riddles and enigmas,
Reveal to me that which resembles to 'take a thousand gold coins'?"

Then he cast his eye upon the fifth, and said:

5. "O such an one of shrewdest wit, endowed with brightest sagacity,
What resembles 'he neglects adornment'? If rightly guided, be quick and tell."

Then he turned in the direction of the sixth, and said:

6. "O thou from whose capacity a rival's steps stop short by far,
What is like thy saying to him who joins with thee in riddles: 'Hold in! hold in!'?"

Then he winked his eyebrows towards the seventh, and said:

7. "O thou who own'st intellect of brilliancy, in subtleness high of rank amongst thy friends,
Explain, and, mind, tell aright in doing so, what saying is similar to 'brother fled'?"

Then he bade the eighth to listen, and indited:

8. "O thou whose gardens of excellence are fresh with flowers in bright array,
What is like telling the sharp of wit in solving riddles: 'he chose not silver'?"

Then he cast a glance upon the ninth, and said:

9. "O thou to whom they point for a mind of ready wit and for eloquence,
Expound to us, what is like the speech of the riddler: 'tread upon the crowd'?"

Said the narrator: Now when he came at last to me, he patted me on the shoulder saying:

10. "O thou possessed of subtleties to baffle sore and floor opponents,
Thou makest clear, so tell us what is like my saying: "be still, my uncle'?"

Then he said: "I have watered you and allowed you time, and if you want me to let you have another draught, I let you have it." So the brunt [heat] of thirst drove us to ask for a second drink. Whereupon he said: "I am not like one who from selfishness stints his boon-companions, nor of those whose fat remains in their own dish." Then he returned to the first, and said:

11. "O thou whose sharpness unfolds a riddle [unties a ticklish knot], however tight,
If one propose as a riddle, 'take this,' say true what is like it."

Then he bent his neck towards the second, and said:

12. "O thou whose eloquence appears clear from his skill in explanation,
What is as if people would say: 'an onager has been decked out'?"

Then he blinked towards the third, and said:

13. "O thou who in sagacity and sharpness art like Asma'i,
What is like saying by way of riddle: 'spend lavishly, thou conquerest then'?"

Then he looked sharp at the fourth, and indited:

14. "O thou who if knotty questions arise enlightens their darkness,
What is it that likens saying: 'sniff in the perfume of grape-wine'?"

Then he ogled the fifth, and said:

15. "O thou whose intellect lets him not give way to anxious thoughts and doubt,
What resembles saying to a man expert in riddles: 'shield the ruined'?"

Then he stepped in front of the sixth, and indited:

16. "O thou endowed with sagacity in which thy perfect worth appears,
The saying, 'he travelled awhile at night,' say what a thing is like to it."

Then he turned his glance towards the seventh, and said:

17. "O thou whose wit, brisk of market, gives thee adornment and honour,
Say, for thou art able to tell us, what word is like 'love a coward'?"

Then he looked in the direction of the eighth, and said:

18. "O thou who in fame hast reached a height surpassing every height by far,
What resembles, tell us, saying: 'give a crook [crutch] deprived of the handle-part'?"

Then he smiled to the ninth, and said:

19. "O thou who hold'st undoubtedly fine judgment and elocution,
What is like saying to the skilled in solving riddles: "I own the bullock'?"

Then he clutched my sleeve, and said:

20. "O thou who hast penetrating sharpness of wit in solving intricate question, bright as a star,
What is resembling the saying: 'whiz of a muzzle'? Explain so that thy expounding renders it clear."

Said Al Hârith, son of Hammâm: Now when he had delighted us with what we had heard, and challenged us to disclose its meaning, we answered: "We are not of the horses of this racecourse, and our hands are not equal to untying these knots; so if thou wilt explain, thou conferrest a favour, and if thou wilt keep it hidden, thou inflictest grief." Then he consulted his mind for and against and shook both his arrows (of consent or refusal), until he was pleased to vouchsafe the bounty, coming forward to the company, and saying: "O ye people of eloquence and distinction, I will forthwith make known to you that which you know not, and thought not you would ever know, so

fasten upon it your vessels and freshen therewith the assemblies." Then he began an explanation which furbished the intellects, and withal emptied the sleeves (breast pockets), until the understandings became brighter than the sun, and the pockets as if yesterday they had not been rich. Now when he bethought himself of departure, he was asked about his abode. Then he sighed as sigheth the bereft mother, and said:

"Each mountain-path is path for me, and ample is my dwelling there,
Save that for Serûj town my heart is crazed with longing, mad with love.
She is my virgin land from whence my erewhile youthful breeze has sprung,
And for her mead so rich of growth above all meads I fondly yearn.
Afar from her no sweet is sweet to me, delightful no delight."

Concluded the narrator his tale: Thereupon I said to my companions, "This is Abû Zayd, the Serûji, whose riddles are the least of his elegancies," and I began to descry to them the beauty of his diction, and the obedience of speech to his will. Then I turned round, and lo! he had leaped up, and was gone with what he had gained. So we wondered at his performance, when he had fallen in our midst, and knew not whither he had wended and swerved.

EXPLANATION OF THE RIDDLES.

1. *Hunger is cheered by provisions* (*jû' umidd bi-zâd*) resembles *ṭawâmîr*, pl. of *ṭâmûr*, books, rolls, scrolls (= *ṭawâ*, hunger, + *mîr*, pass. of *mâr*, has been provided for).

2. *A back* (*which is*) *looked askance at* (*ẓahr aṣâbathu 'ain*) resembles *maṭâ'în*, pl. of *maṭ'ûn*, pierced with a lance (= *maṭâ*, back, + *'în*, pass. of *'ân*, is struck by the evil eye).

3. *He met a gift* (*ṣâdaf jâ'izah*) resembles *al-fâṣilah*, fem. of *al-fâsil*, what separates two things (= *alfâ*, he found, + *ṣilah*, a gift).

4. *Take a thousand gold coins* (*tanâwal alf dînâr*) resembles *hâdiyah*, fem. of *hâdî*, one who guides aright (= *hâ*, take, + *diyah*, fine for bloodshed which amounts to 1,000 dînârs).

5. *He neglects adornment* (*ahmal ḥilyah*) resembles *al-ghâshiyah*, a saddle-cloth (= *alghâ*, he disregarded, + *shiyah*, finery).

6. *Hold in! hold in!* (*ukfuf, ukfuf*) resembles *mahmah*, a desert (= *mah*, stop, repeated for the sake of emphasis).

7. *Brother fled* (*ash-shaqîq aflat*) resembles *akhṭâr*, pl. of *khaṭar*, dangers (= *akh*, brother, + *ṭâr*, he flew, took to flight).

8. *He chose not silver* (*mâ akhtâr fiẓẓah* (resembles *abâriqah*, pl. of *ibrîq*, pitchers (= *abâ*, he refused, + *riqah*, a silver coin).

9. *Tread upon a crowd* (*das jamâ'ah*) resembles *ṭâfiyah*, fem. of *ṭâfî*, what floats on the water (= *ṭâ*, for *ṭa'*, imp. of *waṭa'*, tread under foot, trample upon, + *fiyah*, for *fi'ah*, a troup of men).

10. *Be still my uncle* (*khâlî uskut*) resembles *khâliṣah*, fem. of *khâliṣ*, pure, sincere (= *khâli*, apocopated vocative of *khâlî*, my maternal uncle, + *ṣah*, hush!).

11. *Take this* (*khuz tilk*) resembles *hâtik*, this woman (= *hâ*, take, as in the 4th riddle, + *tik*, fem. of *zâk*, this).

12. *An onager has been decked out* (*ḥimâr waḥsh zîn*) resembles *farâzîn*, pl. of *firzân*, Queens in chess (= *firâ*, wild ass, + *zîn*, pass. of *zân*, he was adorned).

13. *Spend lavishly, thou conquerest then* (*infaq taqma'*) resembles *muntaqim*, one who avenges himself (= *mun*, imp. of *mân*, spend on provisions, + *taqim*, aor. of *waqam*, thou subduest).

14. *Sniff in the perfume of grape-wine* (*istanshi rîḥ mudâmah*) resembles *raḥrâḥ*, vast, wide, ample (= *raḥ*, imp. of *râḥ*, smell, + *râḥ*, one of the names of wine).

15. *Shield the ruined* (*ghaṭṭi halkâ*) resembles *ṣunbûr*, an isolated palm-tree, a word also of various meanings (= *ṣun*, imp. of *ṣân*, shelter, protect, preserve, + *bûr*, pl. of *bâ'ir*, doomed to destruction).

16. *He travelled a while at night* (*sâr bi'l-lail muddah*) resembles *sarâḥîn*, pl. of *sirḥân*, wolves (= *sarâ*, he fared at night, + *ḥîn*, time).

17. *Love a coward* (*iḥbab farûqah*) resembles *miqlâ'*, a sling (= *miq*, imp. of *wamiq*, be in love with, + *lâ'*, timid, pusillanimous).

18. *Give a crock deprived of the handle-part* (*a'ṭi ibrîq yalûḥ bighair 'urwah*) resembles *uskûb*, flowing, shed (= *us*, imp. of *âs*, bestow, + *kûb*, a mug without handle).

19. *I own the bullock* (*aṣ-ṣaur milkî*) resembles *al-laâlî*, pl. of *lu'lu'*, the pearls (= *al-la'â*, the wild ox, + *lî*, to me, mine).

20. *Whiz of a muzzle* (*ṣafîr jaḥfalah*) resembles *mukâshafah*, uncovering, disclosing (= *mukâ*, a whistling sound, produced by blowing into one's hand, + *shafah*, lip).

THE THIRTY-SEVENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF SA'DAH."

In Sa'dah, one of the chief towns of Yemen, Al Ḥârith has contracted an intimacy with the Kadi of the place, whom he occasionally assists in the decision of law cases. One day an old man presents himself before them, complaining bitterly of the untractableness and disobedience of his son. The youth retorts, that his father urges him to beg, although he had formerly strongly impressed him with the ignominy of the practice, in support of which he quotes some verses that his father had taught him on the subject. The latter rejoins that necessity knows no law, and recites on his part some lines of the boy's composition, to the effect, that rather than meekly to submit to poverty a needy man should appeal to the liberality of the wealthy. Thus placed on the horns of a dilemma, the youth sullenly disclaims the use of any such appeal, when munificence is no longer to be found in the world. This stings the Kadi, who belongs to the tribe of Temîm, renowned for their generous disposition, into bestowing a bounty on them, and they leave the court together, the father well pleased with his booty, the son simulating earnest remorsefulness. Ḥârith, whose instinct had told him that the apparent excessive decrepitude of the old man is only a blind, follows and overtakes them, and a cordial recognition takes place between him and Abû Zayd, who, however, soon manages to give him the slip, so as to escape all further inquiries.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I had travelled up to Sa'dah, at a time when I was straight of stature like a spear-shaft and of vigour that outstripped the daughters of Sa'dah (the young of the onager or ostrich). Now when I had seen its freshness and fed [my looks] on her meads, I inquired from the most knowing of its informants, whom of lordly persons and mines of excellence it contained, so that I might take him for a beacon-light (ember) in times of darkness, and my tower of strength in days of oppression. Then there was pointed out to me a Kadi, wide of range [in generosity], easy in his circumstances, a Temîmî in

descent and disposition. So I ceased not seeking approach to him by respectful attendance, at the same time making myself valuable to him by being chary in visiting, until I became the echo of his voice, and the Salmân of his household, and while gathering his honey and inhaling the fragrance of his bay-tree, I used to witness the contentions of litigant parties and to mediate between the unoffending of them and the offender. Now when the Kâdi was sitting to give judgment on a day of flocking together and crowding, lo! there entered an old man, in plumage worse for the wear, of shaky appearance, who looked at the throng with the sharp look of the money-sifter. Then he stated that he had an unmanageable adversary, and it was not but as the scintillating of a spark or the intimation of a beckoning finger, that a lad was put in presence [bold] as though he were a lion. Said the old man: "May Allah help the Kadi, and preserve him from [ever becoming guilty of] connivance! behold this my son, like a bad reed-pen or a rusty sword, ignores the predicaments of equity, and suckles the teats of contravention [contradiction, opposition, gainsaying]. When I advanced, he drew back, when I spoke plain, he shuffled in his speech, when I kindled a fire, he put it out, and when I roasted, he scattered ashes, although I had reared him since he first crawled until he was a youth, and was to him the kindest of trainers and educators." Then the Kadi made much of [put great stress upon] his complaint, and those around him were amazed at it [as at a case of grave concern]. Thereupon he said: "I protest that disobedience in children is one bereavement of twain, and that many an instance

of infertility keeps the eye cooler." Said the boy whom this speech had incensed: "By Him who has set up judges for the sake of justice, and possessed them of the reins of preferment and discrimination, forsooth, he never prayed, but I said Amen, and he never made a claim, but I maintained its truth, he never said '*labbaika*,' but I donned the pilgrim's cloak, and he never struck fire, but I gave sparks, in spite of his being like one who craves for the eggs of the cock-hawk, and wants the camels to fly." Then the Kadi said to him: "Wherewith then used he to vex thee and to try thy obedience?" He said: "Ever since his substance has gone, and he has been visited with penury, he urges me to roll about my tongue in begging, and to ask rain from the clouds of bounty, so that his draught, which was dried up, might flow afresh in abundance, and what was broken in his fortunes might be set again. Yet when he had first taken me into schooling, and taught me culture of mind, he imbued my heart with the notion, that inordinate desire is a thing to be blamed, and covetousness worthy of rebuke, that greed breeds indigestion, and begging is a reproach. Then he indited to me, straight from the parting of his lips, with all the polish of his verse:

"'Content thyself with scanty means, giving thanks therefor, like one who recks the little mighty much.

Shun greediness, that never fails lowering the worth of any wight who may take to it.

Fend thy fair fame and shield it with jealous care, as with a frown the lion would fend his mane.

Bear thou with patience, and forbear, poverty, as lords of holy purpose bore patiently;

Spill not the water of thy face even if he whom thou beg'st from spends on thee gifts galore.

For free is he, who if a mote hurts his eye conceals the mote from even his pupils twain,

And if his whilom gold-stuff has gone to rags sees not his way by begging to fret his cheeks.'"

Then the old man contracted his brows and scowled at his son, and rushed upon him and growled, saying: "Hush! O thou disobedient one, O thou who art choking and stifling me! Woe betide thee, wilt thou teach thy mother how to copulate, and thy nurse how to give thee suck? forsooth, the scorpion has rubbed himself against the snake, and the weanlings have coursed along with the stallions." Then it was as if he repented of what had escaped his mouth, and affection led him to conciliate the boy, for he looked at him with the eye of the fondly disposed, and lowered to him the wing of the kindly, saying: "Alas! dear son, those who are bidden to be contented, and chidden from self-abasement are the owners of merchandise, and the workers for gain through handicraft, but as for those who are possessed of needs, an exception is made in their behalf with regard to matters prohibited. And granted thou wast ignorant of this interpretation, and it has not reached thee what has been said [on this point], wast not thou he who opposed his father in what he said, not revering him:

"'Sit not content with distress and suffering hunger's pangs, that people may say he is high-minded and patience full.

See for thyself if a land that is not decked out with plants, is like a land all around hedged in with trees, rich of growth;

So wend aside from what fools are in their sloth pointing to, for say, what good can there be in wood that bears never fruit?

And lead thy beasts from a place where thou sustainest brunt of thirst, to pasture-grounds whereupon in fertile flow falls the rain,

And ask the drought to descend full from the breast of the cloud, for if thy hands are bedewed then may thy gain prosper thee,
But if thou shouldst be denied, there is no harm in rebuff, for Moses met heretofore, and Prophet Khiẓr, with the same.' ".

Said the narrator: Now when the Kadi saw the contradiction between the speech of the lad and his action, and that he adorned himself with that which was not his own, he looked with wrathful eye, and said: "Temîmî at one time, and Kaisî at another? Fie upon him, who belies what he says, and changes colour as the Ghûl changes colour." Then the boy said: "By Him, who has made thee a key for the truth, and an opener [of justice] amongst mankind, I have been caused to forget, since I became sorrowful, and my wits have been turned rusty, since I waxed thirsty. Moreover, where is the open door, and the ready gift? And is there one left who bestows with full hands, and if asked for food says: 'Take.'" Thereupon the Kadi replied to him: "Stop! for among the missing arrows is one that hits, and not every lightning deceives, so distinguish between the flashes if thou watchest the clouds [for rain], and testify not but what thou knowest." Now when the old man saw that the Kadi was wroth on account of the generous, and thought it a serious thing to reckon all men as [to be] misers, he knew that he would abet his word, and show his munificence. So he belied him not [was not slow] in setting his net, and baking his fish before the fire, and quoth saying:

"O Kadi, thou whose wisdom and kindliness more deeply are rooted than mount Raẓwá,
This youth maintains, misguided by ignorance, that in this world none exercise bounty,

Not knowing that thou art the son of a tribe, whose gifts are like yon quails and yon Manna.
Confer thou then that which will make him ashamed of what he forged of impudent falsehood,
And let me go rejoicing and giving praise for what in helpful bounty thou spendest."

Then the Kadi was pleased at his speech, and bestowed on him liberally of his largess, whereupon he turned his face towards the boy, for whom he had already headed the arrows of rebuke, and said to him: "Hast thou now seen the refutation of thy assertion, and the error of thy opinion? So be not henceforth hasty in thy blame, and pare no wood before testing it; and beware to refuse obedience to thy father. For if thou return to thy revolt against him, there will alight on thee from me that which thou deservest." Then the youth was dumfounded with repentance (fell to biting his hand with remorse), and sought shelter by his parent's side, and presently rose and sped away, while the old man followed him inditing:

"Let him whom his fell fortune has treated ill repair to Ṣa'dah town and her Kadi.
His bounty shames the bounteous that went before, his justice baffles those who come after."

Said the narrator: Now I was bewildered in my mind as to whether I knew the old man, or not, until he had started off on his journey, when I persuaded myself to follow him, even if need be to his abode; haply I might become aware of his secrets and learn what tree was the fuel of his fire. So I flung from me what clung to me, and set out whither he had set out, and he ceased not to step along and I to follow in his track, he to get further, and I to come nearer to him,

until both were face to face, and recognition was incumbent on any two intimates. Then he showed gladness, and did away with his shakiness, saying: "He who deceives his brother may not live (enjoy life)." Accordingly I knew that he was the Serûji and no mistake, and without change of condition. So I hastened towards him to shake [clasp] his hand, and to inquire after his good and evil hap. Thereupon he said: "Here is the dutiful son of thy brother at hand for thee" (*i.e.*, let *him* tell thee what thou wantest to know), and left me passing his way. The youth, however, did but laugh, then he fled, as yonder had fled. So I went back after I had ascertained their identity, but where was I to find the twain of them?

THE THIRTY-EIGHTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF MERV."

"In the thirty-eighth Abû Zayd addresses the governor of a town" (for Englishmen it may not be without interest that the town in question is the famous city of Merv) "in some fine verses in praise of liberality to men of genius." With these few lines Chenery sums up this Maḳâmah, and Preston says that it contains little beyond a repetition of circumstances and phrases which occur in other Assemblies, and is of inferior interest to most of them. It should, however, be kept in view that Ḥarîri's work is not one to be read in uninterrupted succession, like a production of modern fiction, except perhaps by scholars. The whole plan of the work renders it almost inevitable that, to quote once more the words of the former distinguished translator, "the repetition of similar adventures and similar rhetoric becomes monotonous." But Ḥarîri is an author whose book may be taken in hand by a reader of cultivated mind and refined taste at any moment in which the mood seizes him, and be opened at random, when he will always be sure to find much that will entertain, interest, or instruct him, and if he happens to hit on the present Assembly, taking it by itself and on its own merits, I have no doubt that he will proclaim it to be a composition of exquisite beauty,

conceived in Ḥarîri's most happy vein, and written in his most brilliant style.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related : It had become dear to me ever since my foot moved and my pen sputtured, to take literary learning for my roadway and the kindling of my torch thereat for my pursuit. Accordingly I furrowed out its doctors and the treasures of its mysteries, and when I had found of them [such as are] the desire of the seeker, and the burning log to light one's fire from, I clutched with my hand his stirrup, and beseeched him for a dole from out his hoard. Withal I met none that equalled the Serûji in the abundant shower of his clouds, and in applying the pitch to the places where the symptoms of scab appear, save that he used to wander abroad faster than the proverb, and swifter than the moon in her changes, wherefore from longing to encounter him, and from my delight in joining his assemblies, I was eager for peregrination, and found enjoyment in travel which [according to a saying of Mohammed's] is part of the [infernal] torment. So at a time when I had strayed to Merv, and no wonder, the rousing of birds, and the presage which is the harbinger of good, gave me happy tidings of a meeting with him. Hence I ceased not spying for him in the assemblies and on the arrival of caravans, but I found none to give me news of him, nor saw I any trace or speck of him, until despair got the better of hope, and expectation became reduced and subdued. Now one day I was in the presence of the Wâlî of Merv, who was one of those who combine excellence with dominion, when lo, Abû Zayd rose to sight in the rags of one poverty-stricken, and greeted with the greeting

of the needy when he meets a lord of the crown. Then he said to the Wâlî: "Know thou, mayest thou be kept safe from blame, and spared sorrow, that on him who is entrusted with offices, hopes depend, and to him whose degrees have been exalted, needs [wants] are referred, and that he is the fortunate, who if he has the power and destiny aids him, pays the zakât for divine favours, as he pays the zakât for cattle, and who clings to the people commanding reverence, as he clings to his wife and close relations. Truly thou hast become, praise be to Allah, the support of thy city, and the pillar of thy age, to whose sanctuary the saddle-beasts are driven, and from whose generosity bounties are hoped, to whose court requests are carried, and from whose palm relief is expected to descend, for Allah's grace upon thee has been great, and His beneficence in thy behalf plentiful. Now I am an old man who grovels in the dust after having rolled in riches, and who lacks greencrop when he has waxed hoary. I have come to thee from a distant place, and a wretched state, hoping from thy sea a swell, and from thy rank a lift, and hope is the best means of propitiation for him who begs, and the best gift of him who gives. Therefore bestow upon me what is incumbent on thee, and deal me fair, as Allah has dealt fair with thee, and beware to turn thy face from him who visits thee, and repairs to thy house, and to close thy fist [in denial] from him who asks thy gift and appeals for support to thy generosity. For he excels not who is stingy, nor goes he the right way who hoards up. But he is the man of head and heart (*al-labîb*), who when he has, bestows, and when he first earns a profit, profits others, and the

liberal is he who, when he is asked for the gift of gold, is not afraid to give." Then he held in, looking out for the fruit of his planting and watching for the gratification of his soul. Now the Wâlî wished to know whether his well was shallow, or whether his spring had continuity. So he bent his head to think how to strike sparks from his fire-stick and how to discriminate the temper of his blade. But the secret of his silence and of the delaying of his gift was hidden from Abû Zayd: so he flared up in wrath, and indited improvising:

"Despise not [may never thee a curse betide] men of learning because they show clad in rags and destitute paupers,

Nor fail to pay due regard to him who comes full of hope, both if he be glib of speech or if he be tongue-tied.

But give thy bounty to him who solicits help from thee and raise by thy timely aid one whom thou seest downcast.

For hail the wealth of a man whose wealth obtains praise for him, the fame of which travellers through all the world blaze forth.

And he who buys fair renown from humankind by his gifts, will never be overreached, and though he gave rubies.

But for magnanimity the wise would have no excuse, if he aspires to what goes beyond the mere day's food.

Yet to acquire eulogy he strives, and moved by his love of nobleness, lifts his neck to aim at high places.

When he who is generous inhales the fragrance of thanks, he spurns the fragrance of musk, however fine pounded,

And never meet stinginess and praise so that one would think: a lizard this, that a fish, in water this, that ashore [on land].

Beneficence is beloved by men for its qualities, whereas the close-fisted wight is all his days hated.

And his excuses to spend his riches with kindliness, keep blame on him evermore, and people's stern censure.

Be bountiful then with what thy hands have been gathering, that he who begs for thy boon be ever dumfounded,

And take thy share, ere a stroke of fortune come over thee that shows thee thy tree of life deprived of its foliage.

For time is too fickle as in one state to endure, mayst thou delight in that state or may it be hateful."

Said the narrator: Then the Wâlî called him near on account of his ravishing discourse, until he had made him alight on the seat of the circumciser, whereupon he dealt out to him from the streams of his donation that which prognosticated length of skirt and shortness of night for him. So he rose from his presence with a full sleeve and a merry heart. But I followed him, keeping in his direction and tracking his step, until, when he was well out of the Wâlî's gate, and had got clear of his den, I said to him: "Mayst thou thrive on what has been given thee, and be allowed to enjoy long that which has been put in thy possession." Then his face lit up and beamed, and he continued thanks to Allah, be He exalted, whereupon he strutted along with a proud swing, and indited straight off:

"Know, who has gained a portion by plodding dulness, or who owes rank to virtues of those before him.

That my earnings are due to worth, not to meddling, and my station to power of speech, not to kings' grace."

Then he said: "Out on him who blames learning, and hail to him who strives after it and makes it his pursuit;" wherewith he bade me farewell, and went away, leaving me aflame with longing for him.

THE THIRTY-NINTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF 'OMÂN."

Called by some important business to 'Omân on the eastern coast of Arabia, Ḥârith is about to cross the Persian Gulf, when at the moment of departure an old man begs to be taken on board, promising the ship-company in return for their kindness to him, a safe passage, by means of a magic spell in his possession against all dangers of the sea. They comply with his request, and Ḥârith is enchanted when he recognises in the stranger his old friend Abû Zayd. At first all seems to go well. Probably, however, unknown

to the rest of the company, some miscreant was on board, whose presence counteracted to a certain degree Abû Zayd's panacea, for after the voyage had continued for some time under the most promising auspices, they are suddenly overtaken by a violent storm, which forces them to seek refuge in the port of an island. When their provisions begin to run dangerously short, Abû Zayd prevails on Ḥârith to go with him on land for a foraging expedition. Soon they arrived at a magnificent mansion, whose numerous servants are found to be plunged into the utmost grief, because the lady of the house is labouring in throes of a difficult child-birth, and her life almost despaired of. Abû Zayd reassures them, pretending to have another powerful charm for the occasion. With a great display of solemnity, he writes some verses on a piece of meerschaum in which he warns the child of the evils of existence and the troubles of life awaiting it in the world, and which, with delightful humour, are supposed, according to the innate perverseness of man's heart, to act as an irresistible inducement for it to struggle into the light of day. Wrapped in a piece of silk, and profusely perfumed, the talisman is, at his orders, tied to the limbs of the labouring woman, and this time the incantation works well, for soon the confinement is happily got over. The lord of the mansion, in his boundless joy at the birth of a long desired son, not only overwhelms Abû Zayd with costly tokens of his gratitude, but attaches him to his household, with unlimited control over all his wealth. Ḥârith tries to persuade him to continue with him the voyage, but Abû Zayd refuses point blank, paraphrasing in another piece of his charming poetry the popular saying *ubi bene ibi patria*, and Ḥârith reluctantly separates from him, giving vent to his grief and disappointment in a wish, the savagery of which may playfully be converted into the essence of the milk of human kindness by the indulgent reader, who remembers the drift of Abû Zayd's magical verses, and the words of the Greek poet:

"Best for man not to be born, second best, to die as soon as he can."

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I clung, ever since the pile under my *izâr* had grown black, and the down of my cheek had sprouted, to fare through the deserts on the backs of Mahrî camels, now ascending a mountain-tract, now threading my way through low-land, so as to explore the wilds whether trodden or trackless, and to get to ken the road-stations and

watering-places, making the blood flow from the hoofs of horses and camels and jading the swift steeds and the fleet dromedaries. Once when I was weary of desert-travel, and some matter of importance cropped up for me at Ṣuḥâr, I inclined to cross the billowy sea and to choose the swift-sailing ship. So I removed to it my chattels, and took along with me my provisions and water-bags; then I embarked therein as embarketh the timid, who registers vows, who blames himself and would fain find excuses. Scarcely had we settled on board, and hoisted the sails for speed, when we heard from the shore of the roadstead, while the night was darkening and waxing gloomy, a caller who said: "O ye people of this strongbuilt ship, driven on the high sea, by decree of the Mighty, the All-knowing, shall I direct you unto a merchandise that will deliver you from sore torment?" (Koran lxi. 10). Then we said: "Light for us a brand from thy fire, O thou guide, and show us the right path, as the trusty friend shows the right path to the trusty friend." He replied: "Will ye take for companion a son of the road, who carries his provisions in a basket, and whose shadow is not heavy, wishing for nought but a sleeping-place?" So we resolved to lower our wings to him, and not to be stingy in providing for his need. When he had come aboard of the ship, he said: "I take refuge with Allah from the paths of destruction." Then he said: "We have been told in the Traditions, handed down by the doctors of divinity, that Allah, be He exalted, has not made it binding on the ignorant to learn, any more than He has made it incumbent on the learned to teach. Now I possess a charm transmitted from the

Prophets, and I have an advice for you sound of proofs, which it is not in my power to conceal, nor in my nature to withhold. Ponder then my speech and take it in, and learn what you are taught so that you may teach others." Thereupon he shouted with the shout of the boaster, exclaiming: "Know ye what it is? It is the spell of travellers, when voyaging on the sea, and the shield against anxiety, when the wave of the deep rages. By it Noah was protected from the flood, together with what was with him of animated beings, as the verses of the Koran record it." Then after some stories he read out, and some tinselled talk he polished up, he quoted [from the Koran]: "And he said, 'Embark ye therein: in the name of God be its course, and its riding at anchor.'" Thereupon he sighed with the sigh of those burdened with debt, or of the fervent servants of Allah, the revered ones, saying: "Behold me, I have stood amongst you in the stead of the bringer of tidings, and advised you with the advice of the zealous, and have entered with you on the path of those who guide aright, so be Thou my witness, O Allah, who art the best of witnesses." Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Then his eloquent discourse, conspicuous by its beauty, made us wonder, and our voices were raised to him in recitation. But my heart had from the sound of his voice a tinkling of knowledge of the true nature of his sun. So I said to him: "By Him who holds in bondage the fathomless sea, art thou not the Serûji?" He replied: "Aye, and how could the son of brightness remain hidden?" Forthwith I praised my voyage, and revealed my own self since he had revealed his, and we ceased not sailing, while the

sea was smooth, and the sky serene, and life pleasant, and our time a sport, and while I was delighted with meeting him, as the rich delights in his ingot of gold, and rejoiced in his converse, as the drowning man rejoices at being saved, until on a sudden the south wind blew fierce, and the sides [of the ship] bent [groaned], and the travellers forgot what had been, and the waves rushed against them from every quarter. Therefore we veered, on account of this recent calamity, towards one of the islands, to give rest [to our ship] and to rest ourselves, until the wind should calm down. The obstacle to our travelling on, however, continued, so that the provisions dwindled to a mere pittance. Then Abû Zayd said to me: "Look here, the gathering from the tree is not obtained by sitting still: so hast thou a mind to rouse our luck by going on land?" I replied to him: "Lo, I follow thee closer than thy shadow, and wait on thee more obediently than thy shoon." Accordingly we descended upon the island, despite the failing of our strength, to run the chase after provender, though neither of us twain owned a scrap, or was able to find a way in it, but we proceeded to scout within, and to seek shade in its shady places, until we came upon a lofty castle, with an iron gate, and a troupe of slaves in front. These we accosted, that we might make them a ladder to help us up, and a rope to draw water with, but we found every one of them mournful, deep in grief, so that we fancied them utterly broken or dragged into captivity. So we said to them: "O ye slave-boys, what is this sorrow?" But they answered not our call, and spoke not either fair or foul. When we saw that their fire was the fire of the glow-

worm, and their state as the mirage of the deserts, we said: "May their faces wax unsightly, and out upon the churl, and him who hopes aught of him!" Then hastened forward a servant whom old age had visited and weeping overcome, saying: "O ye folks, increase not our distress, and pain us not with reproach, for we are truly in sore anguish and in evil plight that makes us listless of talk." Said Abû Zayd to him: "Relieve thy choking sorrow, and speak out if thou have the power to speak, for thou wilt find at my hand a competent leech and a healing prescriber." He said: "Know thou, that the lord of this castle is the pole-star of this place, and the Shâh of this territory. Withal he is not free from grief on account of his being childless. So he ceased not paying honour to the seed-fields and selecting from the partners of his couch the most exquisite, until he was hailed with the happy tidings of the pregnancy of a noble lady, and his palm-tree gave promise of a shoot. Then vows were vowed in his behalf, and the days and months were counted, and when the time of delivery had come, and necklace and crownlet [for the adornment of the child] were fashioned, the throes of child-birth were severe, and fear was conceived for root and branch; therefore there is none of us who knows rest or tastes sleep save by snatches." Then he burst out weeping and wailed aloud, and repeatedly called on Allah unto whom we shall return. Thereupon Abû Zayd said to him: "Be still, O such a one, and of good cheer, and receive news of joy and proclaim them, for I possess a spell for child-birth, the fame of which is spread abroad amongst mankind." Forthwith the slaves hastened to their master,

announcing each other the release from their calamity, when it took no longer than to say "nay," that one sallied out who summoned us to him, and as soon as we had entered unto him, and were standing in his presence, he said to Abû Zayd: "For sooth thy reward will prosper thee if thy say is true and thy presage fails not." Abû Zayd bade them bring a mended reed-pen, and some meerschaum, and some saffron macerated in pure rose-water. In a breath's time they brought what he had asked for. Then he prostrated himself, rubbing his cheeks in the dust, and said praise to Allah, whose forgiveness he craved, bidding those present to stand off, and keeping them at a distance. Then he took the pen with a mighty show of fuss, and wrote upon the meerschaum with the saffron-solution:

"Child to come, list to one who warns thee beforehand, aye! and warning belongs to faith's foremost duties:

Thou art safe now within a home closely guarded, an abode from all misery well protected,

Nought thou seest there to frighten thee on the part of false a friend or a foeman frank in his hatred,

But as soon as thou salliest forth from its shelter thou alight'st in a dwelling hurtful and shameful,

Where the hardship awaiting thee will betide thee drawing tears from thy eyne in fast-flowing down-pour.

So continue thy easeful life and beware of changing things proved with things that are all uncertain,

Being heedful of one who seeks to beguile thee, that he hurl thee the surer in sorry torment.

Now I gave thee, upon my soul, fair advice, but sound advisers how often are they suspected."

Then he blotted out the writing unawares, besputtering it abundantly, and tied the meerschaum in a shred of silk, after having besprinkled it profusely with ambergris, and bade fasten it to the thigh of the

labouring woman, but that the hand of none menstruous must touch it. Thereupon it took no longer than the taste [lasts on the palate] of drinking, or the interval that the milker makes in drawing the milk, when the body of the child slipped out, through the specific quality of the meerschaum, and the might of the One, the Eternal. Then the castle was filled with joy, and its thane and thralls were ready to fly with delight, and their throng surrounded Abû Zayd, singing his praises and kissing both his hands and deeming themselves blessed by the touch of his tattered garments, so that I was made to fancy him Uways Al-Ḳaranî or Dobays Al-Asadî. Thereupon he bestowed on him in presents of requital, and in abundant gifts that which poured wealth upon him, and brightened the face of his every wish, and his revenue ceased not to come in turn after turn, from the time the lamb was born, until safety was given back to the sea and our voyage to 'Omân became easy. Abû Zayd was contented with the largess received, and prepared for departure; the Wâlî [governor], however, would not allow him to move after he had experienced his blessing, but bade enrol him in his household, so that his hand might make free with his treasures. Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: When I saw that he inclined to where he might gain riches, I took to rebuking him and taunted him with the forsaking of his home and his intimate. He replied: "Off with thee and listen to me:

"To a native place cling not where folks oppress and hold thee in scant esteem,
But depart the land that exalts the low above the high in dignity,

And take thy flight to a safe retreat, although it were on the skirts of Kâf,
With a lofty soar, so as to dwell where naught of soilure attains to thee
And roam about in the world at will, and where thou choosest, select thy home,
Not thinking of thy haunts of old, nor breathing sighs for thy distant friends.
For know full well that a free-born man in his country meets but with disregard,
As the pearl is slighted within its shell and underrated its preciousness."

Thereupon he said: "Suffice thee what thou hast heard, and well done, if thou act accordingly." So I proffered to him my excuses, saying to him: "Make allowance for me," wherewith he accepted them, and excused himself, and provisioned me, stinting naught. Then he escorted me, as one escorts one's nearest relatives, until I had embarked in the boat, when I bade him good-bye, lamenting our separation, and deprecating it, wishing heartily the babe and its mother had come to grief.

THE FORTIETH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF TEBRÎZ."

This Assembly exhibits Abû Zayd in lively altercation with his handsome young wife before the Kadi of Tebrîz, he complaining of her contumacy, she of his abuse of his conjugal rights. Purists and Puritans will probably object to the tone of this composition. But in order to judge it equitably, it should not be forgotten that Harîri is bent on exhausting all the stores, I will advisedly not say all the treasures, of his native language, of which he is justly proud, and the rich and sonorous vocabulary of invective, and even of obscenity, could not be entirely ignored by him. Moreover the grossness, nay coarseness of expression, with which a wonderful display of learning is here interspersed, is not represented as inherent in the characters, but as an assumed part with a view to a specific object. If these

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two points are borne in mind, the unprejudiced reader cannot fail to admire this Assembly as one of the most original, amusing, and spirited pieces of the whole collection. The miserly Kadi, who by the astounding eloquence of the couple is reluctantly coaxed and partly frightened into an act of unwonted generosity, stands out, with his heartrending lamentations over the loss of his gold coins, as a worthy prototype of Shylock in Shakespear's "Merchant of Venice."

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I intended leaving Tebrîz at a time when it was unwholesome [irksome] for high and low, and empty of patrons and men of largess; and while I was making ready my travelling-gear and foraging for some company on the journey, I encountered there Abû Zayd, the Serûji, wrapped up in a cloak and surrounded by females. I asked him about his business, and whither he was bound with his bevy. Said he, pointing to a woman amongst them, fair of face, apparently in high dudgeon: "I had married this one, that she might make me forgetful of exile, and cleanse me from the squalor of celibacy; but I met from her with the sweat of [the carrier of] the water-bag, in that she now kept me out of my right, and now plied me beyond my strength, wherefore I am through her jaded with foot-soreness, and an ally to cark and choking care, and here we are on our way to the judge, that he may strike on the hand of the oppressor. So, if he arrange matters between us, let there be concord, but if not, a divorce, a divorce!" Then I inclined to ascertain to whom the victory would accrue, and what the upshot would be. So I put my present affair behind my back (in the Arabic idiom "behind my ear"), and accompanied the twain, though I should not be of any use. Now, when he was in the presence of the Kadi, who belonged to the number of those who

appreciate parsimony, and stint even tooth-pickings, Abû Zayd crouched on his knees before him, and said to him: "Behold, this my palfrey refuses the bridle, and is much given to bolting, although I am more obedient to her than her finger-tips, and fonder of her than her own heart." Then the Kadi said to her: "Woe betide thee, knowest thou not that stubbornness angers thy lord and master, and requires the lash?" Said she: "But, lo, he is of those who use to prowl behind the house, and to take the neighbour along with the neighbour." Then the Kadi said to him: "Out upon thee, sowest thou in the salt-marshes, and lookest out for chicks, where no chicks are to be got? May it never go well with thee, nor be thou safe from terror." Said Abû Zayd: "Lo by Him, who sends down the winds, she is more of a liar than Sajâḥi." Said she: "Nay! by Him, who has adorned the neck of the dove with a ring, and given wings to the ostrich, he is a worse liar than Abû Ṣamâmah, when he forged falsehoods in Tamâmah." Thereupon Abû Zayd hissed with the hiss of the flaring fire, and blazed up with the blaze of the enraged, saying: "Woe to thee, O thou slattern, O thou strumpet, O thou bane for thy husband and thy neighbour, art thou resolved in privacy to torment me, and showest off in public by giving me the lie? Yet thou knowest, that when I made thee a wife, and gazed at thee, I found thee uglier than a monkey, and drier than a strip of hide, and tougher than a palm-fibre, and more offensive than carrion, and more troublesome than the cholera, and dirtier than a menstrual cloth, and more barefaced than the bark of a tree, and colder than a winter night, and sillier than purslane (the plant

rijlah), and wider than the river Tigris. But I veiled thy blemish, and disclosed not thy disgrace, though, if Shîrîn had presented thee with her beauty, and Zobaydeh with her wealth, and Bilkîs with her throne, and Bûrân with her carpet, and Zebbâ with her kingcraft, and Rab'îah with her piety, and Khindaf with her nobility, and Khansâ with her poetry [such as she indited] upon [the death of her brother] Ṣakhr, I would scorn thee for my saddle-seat or a filly fit for my stallion." Then the woman bristled up, and played the tigress, and bared her fore-arm, and tucked up her skirt, saying to him: "O thou, meaner than Mâdir, and more ill-omened than Kâshir, and more cowardly than Ṣâfir, and flightier than Ṭâmir, hurlest thou at me thy own shame, and thrustest thy knife into my honour, while thou knowest that thou art more contemptible than Kulâmeh, and more vicious than the mule of Abû Dulâmeh, and more indecent than a fart in company, and more out of place than a bug in a perfume box, supposing thou wert al-Ḥasan in his preaching and utterance, and ash-Sha'bî in his learning and memory, and al-Khalîl in his knowledge of prosody and grammar, and Jerîr in his love-song and lampoon, and Koss in his eloquence and address, and 'Abd al-Ḥamîd in his facundity and style of writing, and Abû 'Amr in his reading [of the Koran] and syntax, and Ibn Korayb in his tradition-lore from the Arabs, thinkest thou, that I should like thee as an Imâm for my prayer-niche, and a sword for my scabbard? Not I, by Allah, nor as door-keeper for my gate, or a stick to carry my wallet with." Said the Kadi to her: "I see that ye twain are Shann and Ṭabaqah (or 'an old bag and its doubling'), and Ḥida'ah and Bunduqah

(or 'hawk and hunter'). So give over, man, the altercation, and enter in thy conduct on the level road; but as for thee, abstain from abusing him, and keep still when he comes to the house by its door." Then the woman said: "By Allah, I shall not hold back from him my tongue, until he clothes me, nor will I hoist for him my sail, unless he gives me enough to eat." Thereupon Abû Zayd swore with the three binding forms of oath, that he owned naught but his tattered rags. Thereupon the Kadi looked upon their story with the eye of the sharp-witted, and pondered with the thoughtfulness of the sagacious; then he approached the twain with a face that he made to look stern, and a buckler that he flourished, saying: "Suffices it not to you, to vilify each other in the judgment-hall, and to make bold of this offence, that you needs must proceed from the disgrace of mutual befoulment to the malice of defrauding each other? But I swear by Allah, the fundament of either of you has failed the ditch, and your arrow has missed the pit of the throat. For the Prince of the Faithful has appointed me to give judgment between litigants, not to pay the owings of debtors, and by the thanks due to his favour which has established me in this place, and conferred on me the power of binding and loosing, if ye explain not to me the truth of your case, and the hidden meaning of your deceit, I will surely proclaim the pair of you in the cities, and make an example of you for the wary." Abû Zayd looked down before him, as the serpent looks down, then he said to him: "Listen, listen!

"I am the man of Serûj, she my consort,—the full moon has none but the sun for equal,—

Her company and mine are never severed, nor is her cloister distant from my abbot,

As naught I water but my own plantation; five nights, however, is it now since morning

And eve we wear the sorry garb of hunger, knowing no more what chewing means, or sipping,

So that from sheer exhaustion of our life-breath we are like corpses risen from the grave-yard.

So, when our patience failed, and ev'ry comfort, we came by dint of want whose touch is painful,

To this resort, for good or evil venture, to gain, by hook or crook, some little money.

For poverty, when it assails the free-born, leads him to don the shameful cloak of falsehood.

This then is my condition, this my lesson, see my to-day and ask, what was my yestern.

And bid them mend my case or send to jail me at will, for in thy hand my weal and woe lies."

Then the Kadi said to him: "Cheer up and set thy heart at ease, for it is due to thee that thy fault should be condoned, and thy donation made plentiful." Thereupon his spouse jumped to her feet and drew herself up to her full length, and pointing [beckoning] to those present, said:

"O folks of Tebrîz, ye are blest with a judge who ranks by far ahead of all judges,

No fault in him save that his gift on a day of bounty is dealt out with short measure.

We came to him so that we might cull the fruit from off his tree that never fails yielding.

He sent away the Shaykh, rejoiced with his gift, and treated with regard and distinction,

But turned me off more disappointed than one who watches for the lightning in August,

As though he knew not that it is I who taught the Shaykh to versify with such glibness,

And that I could if ever I were so willed make him the laughing-stock of all Tebrîz."

Said the narrator: Now when the Kadi saw the

stoutness of their hearts and the glibness [readiness] of their tongues, he perceived that he was visited through them with an incurable disease and a crushing [an overwhelming] calamity, and that if he gave to one of the spouses and turned off the other empty-handed, he would be like one who pays a debt with borrowed money and prays the sunset-prayer with two genuflexions. So he frowned and knitted his brows, and raged and fumed, and hemmed and hawed; then he turned to the right and left, and twisted about in distress and regret, and began to abuse the office of a judge and its troubles, and counted up its bothers and vicissitudes, reviling one who seeks it and applies for it. Then he groaned as the despoiled one groans, and wailed until his wailing wellnigh made him appear abject, saying: "This indeed is an astounding thing! Am I in one place to be hit with two arrows, am I in one case made to deal with two debtors, am I able to please both litigants? Where from, I ask, where from?" Then he turned towards his Usher, the carrier out of his behests, and said: "This is not a day of judgment and delivery of sentences, and of decision and execution: this is a day of sorrow, this is a day that involves one in debt, this is a day of crisis, this is a day of loss, this is a day on which one is deprived of one's share, not given it. So rid me of these two babblers and silence their tongues with two gold coins. Then dismiss the company, and close the gate proclaiming that this is an ill-omened day and that the Kadi is in mourning on it; so that no litigant may come into my presence." Accordingly the Usher said the Amen to the Kadi's prayer, weeping along with him in response to his

weeping, whereupon he paid out to Abû Zayd and his spouse the two miṣqâls, and said: "I bear witness that ye twain are the most crafty amongst men and Jinn, but [henceforth] respect the court of judges, and eschew therein ribaldry of speech. For not every Kadi is a Kadi of Tebrîz and not at all times will people listen to doggerel rhyme." So they said to him: "There is not thy like of Uṣhers, and thanks are due to thee"; wherewith they got up and stalked away with their two gold-pieces, roasting the heart of the Kadi on two fires.

THE FORTY-FIRST ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF TANÎS."

On one of his travels Ḥârith has arrived in the old Egyptian town Tanîs, from which the Tanitic mouth of the river Nile derives its name, and he finds in its mosque an eloquent preacher surrounded by a numerous congregation, who listen attentively to his sermon full of lofty moral admonitions. The speaker exhorts his hearers in a powerful address, as usual first in rhymed prose, and subsequently in sonorous verse, with advancing age to abandon the pleasures of youth and worldly pursuits, to atone for their past transgressions by acts of piety and kindliness towards their fellow-creatures, and to make provision from the wealth which they may have acquired on earth, by spending part of it in liberality to the poor. At the close of the discourse, which has moved many of those present to tears, a half-naked youth comes forward, who represents himself in his destitute condition as a fit object on whom to carry into practice the good intentions stirred up in the hearts of the assembly by the earnest words of the venerable Shaykh, and the preacher, on his part, endorses the boy's petition by some additional remarks, calculated to rouse their compassion and sympathy for him. Thus the supplicant reaps a plentiful harvest of bounties bestowed on him, and exultingly walks away, well contented, and praising the generous dispositions of the inhabitants of Tanîs. The Shaykh also takes his departure, and Ḥârith, who thinks he possesses a clue to what is hidden from the unsuspecting rest of the company, follows him. When both have reached a

secluded spot, the former reveals himself as Abû Zayd, and as the father of the boy who has so successfully made application of the sermon delivered in his presence. It must be observed that Preston, who has translated this Assembly in his volume of Makāmāt, stultifies it, by letting the boy himself refer to his relationship to the preacher. There is nothing of the kind in the text, and the introduction of this gratuitous and unwarrantable interpolation entirely destroys the artistic merit of the composition.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I responded to the calls of wantonness in the bloom of my youth, wherefore I ceased not visiting dainty damsels and listening to the tunes of song, until the warner had arrived and the freshness of life had turned its back on me. Then I craved for rectitude of watchful conduct, and repented of what I had trespassed in the face of Allah. So I began to drive out evil inclinations by good deeds and to mend wicked ways before it was too late, for I turned from the morning-call on the fair, to meeting with the God-fearing and from mixing with songstresses to drawing near to men of piety, swearing that I would not associate but with him, who has rooted out error, and whose dissolute manners should have returned to the proper bend, and when I found one loose of rein long of sleep, I removed my abode far from his abode and fled from his scab and ignominy. Now when foreign travel had cast me into Tanîs, and made me alight at its homely [familiar] mosque, I saw therein a man surrounded by a dense circle and thronged spectators, who said with a stout heart and clear tongue: "Poor is the son of Adam, ay, how poor! He relies upon the world, on that which is unreliable, and asks from it a stay by that which has no stability, and through his love for it he is slaughtered thereby with-

out a knife. He is addicted to it through his folly, and is rabid after it through his wretchedness, he hoards up in it through his boastfulness and makes no provision from it for his future state. I swear by Him who has poured out both the waters [sweet and salt, Koran, xxv. 55], and lit up the twain, sun and moon, and exalted the might of the two [holy] stones, if the son of Adam were wise, he would not revel in drinking-bouts, and if he bethought himself of what went before, he would weep blood, and if he were mindful of the requital, he would strive to overtake that which escaped his grasp, and if he looked at the issue he would better the turpitude of his actions. O wonder of all wonders at him who plunges into the abode of fire, while he treasures gold and hoards up riches for his descendants. Again, it is of marvels unheard-of that, though the interspersion [sprinkling] of hoariness warn thee, and thy sun proclaim its setting, yet thou seest not fit to turn, and to cleanse thee from thy blamefulness." Then he broke forth inditing, as inditeth one who leads aright:

"Woe to the man who warned by his hoariness still blindly rushes along on youth's folly bent,

And glances back on pleasure's fire longingly when all his limbs already from weakness shake,

Who rides the steed of wantonness, which he deems a softer couch than chamberlains ever spread,

Not awed by hoary hair which no man of sense sees come without its starry light startling him,

Nor to himself forbidding what right forbids, or heeding aught that may impair fair repute.

Ay, such a man, away with him if he die, and if he live, he's reck'ed as though not alive,

No good in him: alive he breathes fulsomeness, as though a corpse, ten days exhumed after death,

But hail to him whose honour sheds fragrance sweet, bright in its spotless beauty like broidered gown.

So say to him whom stings the thorn of his sin, pluck out the thorn, poor brother, else thou art lost.

Wipe with sincere repentance out any writ that black misdeeds have left on thy book of deeds,

And deal with men of ev'ry kind pleasantly, winning with courtly ways alike fool and sage;

Feather the free whose plumage fair time has stripped, may he not live who, while he can, feathers not.

Help one oppressed by tyranny: if too weak to help thyself, then summon up hosts for him,

And raise him who when he has tripped, calls on thee, haply through him thou risest on gathering-day.

This cup of counsel, drink of it, and bestow on one athirst that which remains in the cup."

Now when he had concluded his tear-provoking sentences and finished the recital of his verses, there rose a lad to his feet, in the freshness of his youth, bare of body, and said: "O ye men of discretion, who listen to injunctions, you have apprehended what has been indited, and understood what has been directed: so, whoever of you intends to accept [the proffered advice], and to mend his future, let him by his beneficence towards me manifest his intention, not withholding from me his largess. For by Him who knows all things secret, and condones obduracy in transgression, my hidden state is like what ye behold of me, and my face is well worthy of being spared shame: so aid me that ye may have aid conferred on you." Then the Shaykh held forth what might dispose their hearts kindly towards him, and make easy for him the attainment of his wish, until his well came upon a spring and his desert-soil was covered with green-food. So when his pouch was right full, he hied away with a swagger, and

singing the praises of Tanîs. But the Shaykh pleased no further stay, after the youth had retreated. He bade them raise their hands in prayer, and turned to his homeward way. Said the narrator: Now I was on the alert to test him, and solve his mystery. So I followed him while he strode apace on his road, and vouchsafed not to break his silence. But when he felt secure of any sudden intruder and confidential talk became possible, he turned his neck to me, and greeted me with the greeting of joyful recognition, and said: "Wast thou pleased with the sharpness of that fawn?" Said I: "Ay, by the Faithful, the Guardian." He said: "Lo, he is the youngster of the Serûji, by Him who brings the pearl from out the deep." Then I said: "I [dare] testify that thou art the tree on which his fruit has grown, and the fire from which his spark has sprung." So he confessed to the truth of my surmise, and was gratified that I disclosed my identity. Then he said: "Hast thou a mind to hasten with me to the house, so that we may pledge each other with the cup of the ruddy wine?" But I said to him: "Woe to thee! Will ye enjoin what is right upon others, and forget your own souls?" (Koran, ii. 41). He displayed his teeth, smiling at me, and passed on without demur. Then it occurred to him to turn back to me, and he said:

"Drive cark and care away with wine unalloyed, and cheer thy heart, not pining with fretful grief,
And say to him who blames thee for warding off the pang of pain: 'Enough of thee, get thee gone!'"

Then he said: "As for me, I am going where I may quaff my morning and evening draught, and if thou

wilt not come with me and accord with the mirthful, thou art no companion for me, and thy road is not my road. So step out of my way and turn aside from it, and pry and spy not after me." Forthwith he turned his back on me and went, without casting a glance behind him. Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Then I burnt with grief at his departure and fain would not have met him.

THE FORTY-SECOND ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF NAJRÂN."

The scene of this Assembly, as the title indicates, is Najrân, a celebrated town of Yemen, in Mohammed's time chiefly inhabited by Christians, whose bishop Ḳoss became proverbial for eloquence and is said to have originated the famous phrase *ammâ ba'd* (and now to proceed), the formula of transition from the introductory prayer or preliminary remarks to the principal subject of a discourse.

Al Ḥârith, while making a prolonged stay in this city, meets with an assembly of people engaged in proposing riddles. An old man, who joins them, taunts them with the futility of their pursuit, but when he perceives that his remarks have provoked their violent anger, he appeases and at the same time dumfounds them, by ten riddles of his own composition. These riddles hold the middle between those of the thirty-sixth Assembly, which are of the nature of our conundrum, and the enigmatical descriptions of the eighth, the early part of the twenty-ninth and the thirty-fifth, and are like these largely interspersed with plays on words which frequently render a readable translation exceedingly difficult. Mr. Chenery in his summary of the last twenty-four Assemblies adduces the following instance (vol. i., p. 81), which we reprint in order to give the reader an opportunity of comparing his translation of the passage with the metrical rendering attempted in these pages:

"What is he, who weds two sisters, both openly and secretly, but none accuses him for it?

When he visits the one, he visits also the other; and though husbands may be partial, he is not so.

He increases his visits as his wives grow grey: now this is an affection rare among husbands."

The answer to this is the pencil used to place the *kohl*, or ointment on the eyes: the two eyelids are the wives, each of which it anoints at the same time without partiality, and as they grow old, the necessity for anointing them increases."

Our translation of the riddle runs:

What groom is it who weds, both in secret and openly, two sisters, and no offence at his wedlock is ever found?

When waiting on one, he waits as well on the other eke: if husbands be partial, no such bias is seen in him;

His attentions increase, as the sweethearts are growing grey, and so does his largess: what a rare thing in married men!

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: The castings of travel and the by-paths of inclination used to throw me about, until I became a son of every soil and a brother of every foreign land, save that I crossed no valley, nor witnessed any Assembly, unless I fetched light from the torch of learning that consoles for griefs, and raises the worth of man, so that the habit was known of me, and became the tale of tongues with regard to me, cleaving closer to me than love to the Benû 'Uẓrah, and bravery to the race of Abû Ṣufrah. Now when I had made for a while a stay at Najrân and selected there my friends and neighbours, I took its assemblies for my visiting-place, and for the resort of my sportive recreation and my night-talk, being assiduous in my attendance at them morn and eve, and seeing therein both what rejoices the heart and distresses it. Once while I was in a thronged assembly and a concourse densely crowded, there crouched before us an aged man, burdened with senility, who greeted after the fashion of a beguiler's greeting, with a glib tongue, whereupon he said: "O ye full moons of gatherings, and seas of bounties, forsooth the morning-light is evident to him who has two eyne, and beholding holds the stead of two

witnesses. So what see you fit to do in what you see [of my state]: will you vouchsafe help, or recede when ye are called upon?" Said they: "By Allah, thou hast provoked wrath, and while thy wish has been to [open a spring] make spring the water, thou hast caused it to sink away." Then he conjured them by Allah to tell him from what he had interrupted them, so that he made it incumbent upon them to answer. So they said: "We were vying in proposing riddles, as people vie in shooting arrows on a day of battle." Then he refrained not from vilifying their missile, and treating this feat as a futile thing. Forthwith the tongue-gifted of the people railed at him and tilted at him with the lances of reproach, and he began to excuse himself for his slip, and to repent of his speech while they persisted in upbraiding him, and responded to the war-cry of his contention, until he said to them: "O my good people, forbearance is part of generosity of disposition: abstain then from taunt and foul abuse, rather come on that we may riddle together, and let him be judge who excels." Thereupon the fire of their rage subsided, and their anger was allayed. They agreed to what he stipulated against them and for them, and desired him to be the first of them. Then he kept back as long as a boot-lace may be tied, or a saddle-girth fastened, when he said: "Listen, may ye be preserved of levity, and given your fill of life's enjoyment," and he indited riddling upon a ventilating-fan of canvas (punkah):

"A maiden I know, brisk, full of speed in her ministry, returning the same track that she went by when starting off:

A driver she has, kinsman of hers, who is urging her, but while he thus is speeding her on, is her helpmate too.

In summer she is seen dew-besprinkled and moist and fresh, when summer is gone, her body shows flabby and loose and dry."

Then he said: "Here is another for you, O ye lords of excellence, and centres of intellect," and indited riddling upon the rope of palm-fibre:

"A son there is of a mother fair, whose root has sprung from her lofty plant:
He hugs her neck, though for some time, she had erewhile discarded him:
He who reaps her beauty ascends by means of him and none forbids and blames."

Then he said: "Here is another for you, hidden of signification and fraught with obscurity," and indited, riddling upon the reed-pen:

"One split in his head it is through whom 'the writ' is known, as honoured recording angels take their pride in him;
When given to drink he craves for more, as though athirst, and settles to rest when thirstiness takes hold of him;
And scatters tears about him when ye bid him run, but tears that sparkle with the brightness of a smile."

Then he said: "Take this one also, clear of indication, and perspicuous of expression," and indited riddling upon the kohl-pencil:

"What groom is it who weds, both in secret and openly, two sisters, and no offence at his wedlock is ever found?
When waiting on one, he waits as well on the other eke: if husbands are partial, no such bias is seen in him;
His attentions increase as the sweethearts are growing grey, and so does his largess: what a rare thing in married men!"

Then he said: "Again this one, O ye men of understanding and standards of learning," and indited riddling upon the water-wheel:

"One restless, although firmly fixed, bestowing gifts, not working mischief,
Now plunging, now uprising again, a marvel how he sinks and soars:

He pours down tears as one oppressed, yet is his fierceness to be feared:

For then he brings destruction on, although his inmost heart is pure."

Said the narrator: Now, when he had launched forth the five which he had strung together he said: "O my good people, ponder these five and close your five upon them, then as you please gather your skirts [for departure], or accept an increase from the same measure." Then the desire for more made it a light matter for the people to be taxed with dulness. So they said to him: "Our comprehension falls short of thy sharpness, so as to disable us to draw sparks from thy fire-shaft, and to discern the lineaments of thy blade: so if thou wilt make the ten full, it rests with thee." Then he rejoiced with the rejoicing of one whose arrow has hit, and whose adversary has been silenced, whereupon he opened his speech [with the words] in the name of Allah, and indited riddling upon the cooling-vessel:

"One veiled as if sorrowful, and gladsome withal to see, although she alike of grief and of joy is unconscious.

Approached for her offspring sake at times, and how many times a wife would be divorced were it not that she has a child.

At times she is discarded, though unchanged in all her ways: discarding one unaltered in manners is cruelty.

When nights begin to shorten we relish her intercourse, as soon as they grow longer we care not for her embrace.

Her outward attire is showy [pleasing], disdained is her under-cloth, but why should we disdain that which wisdom approveth of?

Then he showed his yellow dog-teeth, and indited riddling upon the finger-nail:

"One of whose sharpness I fight shy, he grows without either food, or drink:

Seen during Ḥajj, he disappears on offering-day, how strange to tell!"

Then he looked askance as looketh the Ifrit, and indited riddling upon the sulphur-match :

" And who is the slighted one, sought and rejected in turns, though well thou knowest thou canst not spare her :
She has two heads of most perfect resemblance, though one of them is opposite the other :
If both are painted, she is put to torture, but spurned without the paint, and recked for nothing."

Then he roared with the roar of the stallion, and indited riddling upon the milk of the vine-tree :

" What is the thing, that when it corrupts, its error turns to righteousness,
And when its qualities are choice it stirs up mischief where it appears :
Its parent is of pure descent, but wicked that which he begets."

Then he placed his travelling staff beneath his arm, and indited riddling upon a goldsmith's balance :

" One flighty and leaning with one half to one side, but no man of sense will upbraid him for either :
He always is raised up on high as a just king is rightly exalted for aye in his station.
Alike are to him both the pebble and nugget, though truth should in no wise be balanced with falsehood.
And most to be wondered at in his description, if people regard him with eyes of discernment,
Is that by his judgment the parties abide, though they know him as flighty by nature, and partial."

Said the narrator : Thereupon their thoughts were wandering in the vales of fancies and straying as the love-crazed strayeth, until time waxed long and looks grew sad. So when he saw that they rubbed the fire-shafts and no spark sprang forth, and that they consumed the day in barren wishes, he said : " O my good people, until when will ye consider and how long will ye delay ? Has the time not come for that the hidden

should be disclosed, or the ignorant should surrender ?" So they said : "By Allah thou hast tied it hard, and set up the net and caught the game : rule then, as thou wilt, and get the booty and renown." Then he fixed for every riddle a fee and claimed it from them in ready cash. Forthwith he opened the locks, and set a mark on every [head] piece of his cattle, and wished to decamp. But the headman of the people laid hold on him and said to him : "No dissembling after this day, and tell thy pedigree before thou goest, and reck this as the dowry of divorce." Then he looked down sulkily, so that we said "He is of doubtful birth," whereupon he indited while his tears were flowing :

"Serûj the place where my sun rose, the home of my joy and comfort,
But now bereft of her pleasures, of all my soul took delight in,
I had to change her for exile, embittering past and present :
No biding-place have on earth I, no rest there is for my camel.
My morn, my eve pass on one day in Nejd, in Syria another,
I drag my life out with food that dejects the heart, vile and abject,
No copper-coin own I ever ;—a coin ! from whom should I get it ?
Who lives a life such as I live, has bought it at losing bargain."

Then he put the select of the money into his belt, and went to wander on the face of the earth. We conjured him to return, and made him great our promises, but by [the life of] thy father, he never came back and our desire for him booted not.

THE FORTY-THIRD ASSEMBLY, CALLED "AL-BAKRÎYAH."

In this Assembly Abû Zayd displays his eloquence and mastery of the Arabic tongue in various ways. Ḥaḍramowt in Yemen being celebrated both for its camel-breed and its cordwainery, the use of terms which might equally well apply to a young camel or a sandal, gives rise to an adventure, of which Abû Zayd renders a spirited

account. Al Ḥârith, as usually amused and charmed by his friend's descriptive powers, asks him whether he had ever met his equal in the gift of speech. Abû Zayd readily answers in the affirmative, and relates how once he was about to marry, but in the last moment grave doubts occurred to him as to the advisability of the step. After a sleepless night, passed in pondering anxiously the reasons for and against, he resolves early in the morning to go out and consult the first whom he would encounter. This happens to be a youth, a most unlikely person to speak authoritatively on the subject; he, however, keeping to his resolution, states his case, and when the lad inquires from him whether he had a maiden or a matron in view, he says that he has not made up his mind on the point, but was willing to abide by the decision of his interlocutor. The latter at once pictures with a celebrated modern debater's skill first the white and then the black of either class of ladies, and when Abû Zayd, bewildered by his contradictory ruling, suggests that under the circumstances it might be safer to become a monk, he again confuses him, by severely condemning celibacy and extolling the advantages of matrimony, and finally leaves Abû Zayd more in doubt than ever, but determined not to consult striplings again on a question of home-rule. Ḥârith, however, shrewdly guesses that the stripling is fictitious, and the whole debate improvised by the Shaykh, as a fresh feat of his consummate art, which leads him to speak with effusion in praise of learning and literary accomplishments. Abû Zayd demurs that nowadays learning is only appreciated when backed up by wealth and high birth, and soon finds occasion to prove his assertion in a lively dialogue with a youthful inhabitant of a village on their road. While thus the enthusiastic Ḥârith is forced to acknowledge that erudition fetches less than nothing in the market of a deteriorated world, the unscrupulous Abû Zayd sees in the fact a sufficient excuse for himself to swindle, for a parting shot, his friend out of a more saleable commodity.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: Peregrination that casts a man about, and troublesome travel had wafted me to a tract where the experienced guide would lose his way, and the venturesome be seized with terror, and I met with that which the bewildered and lonely meet with, and saw sights that I had loathed, though I made stout my frightened heart and urged on my jaded

beast, journeying forth as one who throws both divining arrows and resigns himself to destruction, and I ceased not trotting and cantering and traversing mile after mile until the sun was nigh setting and light veiling itself, when I conceived fear because of the downfall of darkness and the onslaught of the host of Ham [the father of blackamoors], and knew not whether to gather my skirts and tether, or to face the night and grope my way. Now while I was revolving in my mind for what I should decide myself, there appeared to me the form of a camel in the shelter of a mountain, and I hoped it to be the riding-beast of one taking rest, and made for it cautiously. Then my surmise proved soothsay, and the riding-beast a swift dromedary, whose resting master was wrapped up in his striped cloak and drowned in sleep. So I sat beside his head until he awoke from his drowse; then when his lamps were lit (*i.e.*, his eyes opened), and he saw who had suddenly come upon him, he started back, as starts the suspicious, and said: "[Is it] thy brother or the wolf?" Said I: "Nay, one groping in the night, who has lost his way: so give me light, that I also may strike it for thee." He replied: "Let thy anxiety be at rest, for thou hast many a brother whom thy mother bore not." Then my fear departed, and sleepfulness came to my eyne. But he said: "In the morning people praise night-faring; seest thou then fit what I see fit?" Said I: "Behold, I am more obedient to thee than thy shoon, and agree better with thee than thy food." Then he commended my friendly disposition, and hailed my companionship applaudingly, whereupon we saddled our beasts in haste and set out on our night-travel, and we ceased not to

speed our faring and to battle against sleep until the night had reached her end and morning raised his standard, and when the dawn broke and naught remained that was not clearly visible, I scanned the features of my mate in the journey, and the partner in my night-talk, when, lo, it was Abû Zayd, the object of the seeker's desire and the road-sign of the rightly guided. Then we bestowed on each other the greeting of two lovers who have met after separation, whereupon we communed our secrets and intimated our mutual tidings, my camel groaning with fatigue, while his mount flitted along with the flitting [fleetness] of the young ostrich. I wondered at the strength of her build and the extent of her [power of] endurance. So I began to descry her mettle, and asked him whence he had chosen her. Said he: "Ay, this camel has a story sweet to listen to, and pleasant to relate. So if thou likest to hear thereof, make a halt, and if thou art not so minded, then hearken not." Thereupon I made my jaded beast kneel down for him to speak, and made my ear a target for what he had to narrate. Said he: "Know that I had her exhibited to me for sale at Ḥaḍramowt, and I endured death-pangs to acquire her, and I ceased not faring on her over the lands, and treading with her hoofs the sharp stones [or flints], until I found her doughty for travels, and a provision for the time of stay (on account of her abundance of milk), whom no fatigue overcame, with whom no stout camel kept pace, and who knew not what pitch is. Accordingly I made her my mainstay for good and evil, and held her in the place of one who benefits and gives joy. Now it happened that she had strayed some little while since, and

I had no other mount. So I was overwhelmed with grief and well-nigh undone, forgetting every calamity that had gone before, and remaining three days without being able to travel on, and without tasting sleep but a little at a time. Then I began to follow up the roads and to explore the pastures and the halting-stages, but I got no wind of her, nor the quiet of despair, and whenever I reminded me of her fleetness and her readiness to vie with the birds, the remembrance sickened me and the thought thereof crazed me. One day, while I was in the tent-village of some clan, I heard a distant person, and an isolated voice [crying out]: 'Who has lost a mount hailing from Ḥaḍramowt, one easy of step, her hide is marked, and her blemish has been cut short, and her bridle is plaited, and her back is though it had been broken and reset. She adorns her who travels thereon and furthers the journey at the oncoming of night, and keeps always close to thee, weariness comes not near her, and footsoreness befalls her not, she needs no stick, and resists not him who treats her roughly.'" Said Abû Zayd: "Then the voice drew me towards the caller, and gave me glad tidings of the recovery of my lost one, and when I came up to him and had made salutation to him, I said to him: 'Give over the mount, and take thy guerdon.' Said he: 'And what is thy mount, may thy error be forgiven thee?' I said: 'A camel whose body is like a hillock, and her hump like a dome, and her milk the fill of the pail, and I would have been given twenty [dînârs] for her, when I alighted at Yabrîn, and asked more from the bidder, and knew that he was mistaken [in not buying her].' Then he turned from me when he heard my description, and

said: 'Thou art not the owner of my trove.' Thereupon I took hold of his collar, and persisted in giving him the lie, and strove to tear his garments, while he said: 'O such a one, my mount is not that which thou seekest for, so withhold from thy rashness, and give over thy abuse, or else sue me before the judge of this tribe, who is not liable to error, and if he adjudges her to thee, take her, but if he denies her to thee, jabber no more.' Then I saw no cure [or remedy] for my affair, and no way out of my anxiety, but to repair to the judge, even though he should cuff me. So we hastened [or sped] to a Shaykh, stoutly erect, with handsome headgear, concerning whom one could perceive that the birds might perch quietly on him, and that he was not unjust. Thereupon I broke forth complaining of ill-use, and lamenting, while my companion was silent, not moving his lips, until, when I had emptied my quiver, and finished my say, he brought out a sandal, heavy of weight, ready for the road on rough ground, and said: 'This is she whom I designated, and her I described, and if it is she from whom he expected twenty, there he is with his eyes open; consequently he has lied in his claim, and it is an abomination what he has falsely put forth, by Allah, else let him stretch out his nape, and show plainly the truth of what he has said.' Then the judge said: 'Oh Allah, [I crave] thy forgiveness,' and he began to turn the sandal this side and that side, whereupon he said: As for this sandal, it is my sandal, and as for thy mount, it is in my dwelling, so get thee up to take thy camel, and do good according to thy power.' Then I rose, and said:

"I swear it by the ancient house, the worshipful, and those who circumambulate the holy fane,

Thou art a good man to appeal for justice to, the best of Kadis judging amongst Arab tribes,
So live as long as camels speed the pilgrims on."

Then he replied without deliberation and on the spur of the moment, saying:

"Allah reward thee for thy thanks, dear nephew mine, though I exact no thanks as ever due to me,
For worst of men is he who wrongs, when made a judge, and who, when made trustee of aught, betrays his trust,
These twain I reckon with the dog alike in worth."

Thereupon he ordered one into my presence, to hand over to me my camel, without snubbing me for his favour, and I went away successful in my suit, and trailing the skirt of joy, calling out: "How marvellous!"—Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Then I said to him: "By Allah! thou hast told a wonderful tale, and been lavish in thy praise on a subject thou knowest well. [Tell me] I conjure thee by Allah, hast thou ever found one more gifted with the sorcery of eloquence than thyself, and a finer craftsman in fashioning the jewellery of speech?" He replied: "By Allah, yea, listen therefore and enjoy [what thou wilt hear]. I had intended, at a time when I made for Tihâmeh, on taking a wife to myself, so that she might be a helpmate to me. Now when the resident proxy [for the conduct of the marriage negotiation] had been instructed, and the affair was all but concluded, I bethought myself with the thoughtfulness of one who guards against a mistake, and considers carefully where the arrow may fall, passing my night in communing with my tortured heart, and revolving my wavering resolve, until I decided that I would go out early in the morning and consult the first whom I saw. So when dark-

ness had drawn in her tent-ropes, and the stars had turned their tails, I sallied forth in the morning like one who seeks a stray beast, and was early with the earliness of the diviner from the flight of birds. Then I encountered a youth, whose face pleaded in his favour, wherefore I augured well from his cheering aspect and wished to take light from his views on matrimony. Said he: 'Wishest thou her to be a matron, or a maid that gives trouble?' I replied: 'Choose thou for me what thou seest fit, I have put the matter in thy hands (lit. thrown the loops or handles to thee)." Then he said: 'To me then belongs the explanation, and on thee devolves the application, so listen, may I be thy ransom after the burial of thy enemies: as for the virgin, she is a treasured pearl, and a hidden egg, an early fruit ripe for gathering, and a must that agrees well with thee, a fresh meadow, and a necklace costly and precious, none has soiled her with his touch, and no intimate has come near her, no wanton has plied her, and no deflowerer has despoiled her. She has a face suffused with shame, and a bashful eye, her tongue is faltering, and her heart is pure; withal she is a playful puppet, and a sportive doll, a frolicsome gazelle, and accomplished gracefulness, a jewelled belt bright and new, and a sharer of thy couch that rejuvenates, not renders hoary. But for the matron: she is the trained steed, the ready morsel, the desire made easy, one who has gained knowledge by repeated practice; the fond companion and confidential friend, the skilful and well advised, the intelligent and experienced; moreover, she is the hasty meal of the rider, a slip-knot for the suing proxy [or suitor], an easy mount for

the enfeebled, a booty swiftly snatched by the combatant; her disposition is gentle, her bonds are light to bear, her inward state is clearly manifest, and her service adorns; and I swear by Allah, that I have been truthful in both descriptions, and have displayed the two kinds, by which of the twain is thy heart enraptured, and which rouses thy lust (on which of them stands thy carnal desire)?'" Said Abû Zayd: "Then I saw that he was a stone against which the adversary must be on his guard, and by which the cupping-places of the veins are made to bleed, save that I said: 'I had heard that the virgin is stronger in her love, and less given to wiles.' Said he: 'Upon my life, this has been said indeed, but how many a say has done harm. Woe betide thee, she is a filly refusing the bridle, and the mount tardy to be tamed, the fire-shaft difficult to strike from, and the fortress hard to conquer; moreover, the provision she requires is plentiful, and the help she affords is scanty, her enjoyment is savourless, and her coquettishness provoking, her hand is clumsy, her temper a snake that will not be charmed, and her disposition froward, her night is a long and dark night forsooth [her night is a night indeed]; to break her in is a heavy task, and to know her needs the lifting of a screen, and oftentimes she puts the combatant to shame, and is averse to the sportive, and angers one inclined to toy, and humbles the experienced stallion; moreover, it is she who says: "I dress and sit in company, so I seek one who holds and spends."' Said I to him: 'What then thinkest thou of the matron, O father of all that is sweet?' He replied: 'Woe betide thee! listest thou for the remnant of the dishes, and the

residue of the watering-ponds? for draggled garments and worn-out vessels? For one dainty, who browses on every pasture? One lavish of expenditure, a spend-thrift, an impudent shrew? One grasping and never satisfied? Moreover, all her talk is: "I was and have become, erewhile when I was wronged I had given me help, but what a difference between to-day and yester-day, and where is the moon beside the sun?" [Listest thou for her] though she be always bewailing [her former husband], and blest [with adult sons], and withal a bold-faced wanton; she is a collar [round a man's neck] that breeds vermin and an ulcer that never cicatrizes.' Then I said to him: 'Art thou of opinion that I should become a monk, and enter on that path of conduct?' Thereupon he chid me with the chiding of one who rails at the slip of his pupil, saying: 'Woe to thee, wilt thou follow in the track of the monks, when the truth has been manifest? Fy on thee and the weakness of thy understanding, out upon thee and them! Showest thou thyself up as though thou hadst not heard that there is no monkery in Islâm, and hadst not been told of the wedlocks of thy Prophet, may purest peace be upon him? Or knowest thou not that a good helpmate puts thy house in order, and obeys thy voice, sobers thy sight, and brings thy fame into good odour? Through her thou beholdest the coolness of thy eye, and the flower sweet to thy nostrils, and the joy of thy heart, and the lastingness of thy memory, and the solace of thy day and morrow (all this meaning offspring). How then art thou averse to the ordinance of the sent ones, and the enjoyment of the wedded, and the path of the guarded, and that

which draws forth wealth and sons? By Allah, ill pleases in thee, what I have heard from thy mouth.' Then he turned from me as one enraged, and bounded aside with the bound of the locust. Said I to him: 'Allah curse thee! Wilt thou strut jauntily away and leave me bewildered?' Said he: 'I suspect thou pretendest goodness, and indulgest thyself a bit, so that thou mayest dispense with a damsel exacting a big dowry.' Said I to him: 'Allah confound thy suspicion, and allow not thy generation to grow old.' Whereupon I went away from him shamefacedly, and repented of consulting striplings." Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, continued: Then I said to him: "I swear by Him who has planted the forests that this controversy was carried on by thee and with thee (*i.e.*, between thee and thy own self)." So he burst out laughing exceedingly, and rejoiced with the glee of the thoroughgoing, whereupon he said: "Lick up the honey and ask no questions." Then I began to expatiate in the praise of learning, and to exalt its owner above the possessor of riches. But he glanced at me with the glance of one who taxes with ignorance, and winked at me indulgently, and when I waxed excessive in my partiality for the learned fraternity, he said to me: "Hush, hear from me and inwardly digest:

"They say that a man's chief adornment and pride, and his beauty is learning deep-rooted, sound,

Alas, it adorns but the wealthy and him, whose summit of lordship is rising aloft:

But as for the poor man I reckon for him far better than learning a loaf and a stew.

What beauty bestows it on him, if they say: a scholar, a school-drudge, or may be a clerk."

Thereupon he said: "Presently there will become evident to thee the truth of my assertion, and the illustration of my argument." So we travelled on with unfailing strength and without flagging in our exertion, until the journey brought us to a village, may the good keep aloof from it, and forthwith we entered it to forage for provender, for we were both of us short of provisions. Now we had not reached the halting-place, and the spot assigned for the kneeling down of the camels, before a lad met us, who had not known yet [or grown up to the state of] sin, with a bundle of grass on his shoulder. Abû Zayd greeted him with the salutation of the Moslem, and asked him to stand still, and give information. Said he: "And of what wishest thou to ask, may Allah prosper thee." He said: "Are here fresh dates sold for discourses?" He replied: "No, by Allah." Said he: "Nor green dates for witticisms?" He replied: "Certainly not, by Allah." Said he: "Nor fruit for night-talk?" He replied: "Far from it, by Allah." Said he: "Nor honey-fritters for poems?" He replied: "Be silent, may Allah preserve thee!" Said he: "Nor bread in broth for choice verses?" He replied: "Whither stray thy wits, may Allah guide thee aright." Said he: "Nor sifted flour for subtle sayings?" He replied: "Give over with this, may Allah restore thy senses." But Abû Zayd took pleasure in reiterating question and reply, and measuring out from this self-same sack, and the youth perceived that the goal of his talk was distant, and that the Shaykh was a devilkin. So he said: "Let this suffice thee, O Shaykh, I know now what is thy drift, and see clearly thy quiddity. Take

then thy answer in a lump, and be satisfied with it for thy ken: In this place poetry fetches not a barley-corn, nor prose a bread-crumb, nor a narrative nail-parings, nor a treatise slop-water, nor the wise maxims of Loḳmân a mouthful of food, nor the history of battles a morsel of meat, for, as for the people of this age, there is none amongst them who bestows a gift when an encomium has been fashioned for him, none who gives a reward when a poem has been recited to him, none who shows himself bountiful when a tale has diverted him, none who provides support, though he be a prince, and with them the learned is like a waste spring-dwelling: if no rain falls in abundance thereon, it has no value, and no beast approaches it; and in like manner learning, if no wealth abets it, its study is a weary toil, and its profit a fagot." Thereupon he departed in haste, and went off and ran away. Said Abû Zayd to me: "Art thou aware now, that learning is slack, and its whilom aiders have turned their backs on it?" Then I admitted the sharpness of his sagacity, and resigned myself to the decree of necessity. Said he: "Let us by this time leave off discussion, and dive into the chapter of platters: know that adorned speeches satisfy not him who is a-hunger, and what is thy advice with regard to what keeps back the last gasp and quenches the fire of the entrails?" I replied: "The command stands with thee, and the reins are in thy hand." Said he: "I opine that thou shouldst pawn thy sword to satisfy thy gut and thy guest: so give it to me and tarry here, that I may return to thee with something to swallow." Now I took his proposal in good faith, and invested him with the sword and the pledge, and he

lagged not to mount his camel, and to violate truth and trustiness. I stayed a long time waiting for him, then I got me up to follow him, but I was like one whose milk has run short in summer, and met neither him nor my sword.

THE FORTY-FOURTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "THE WINTRY."

This Assembly contains a series of puzzling statements, made by Abû Zayd in a circle of guests, who on a cold winter night warm themselves at the fire and enjoy the profuse hospitality of a generous entertainer. The intelligibleness of these statements, like that of the legal questions of the thirty-second Assembly, depends on the double meaning of the terms in which they are worded. Apparently, therefore, they refuse translation into any other language, which cannot supply similar ambiguities, but it must not be forgotten that the more recondite meanings of the several idioms require explanation even to the average Arab, who is not initiated in all the subtleties of his mother-tongue, and notably in this particular instance the English reader, who consults the short notes, attached to each puzzle, has even the advantage over Abû Zayd's audience. For the wily Shaykh amuses himself by secretly departing in the middle of the night, without vouchsafing to his fellow-guests the interpretation promised for the morning, and probably thinking that his noble and presumably highly cultured host does not need it. He who has made himself acquainted with the hidden meanings, and then once more peruses the *double-entendres* in their entirety, can scarcely fail to be vastly delighted by the string of seeming absurdities and contradictions, which, moreover, in the Arab original forms a poetical composition with the same rhyme running through the whole. While adhering as much as possible to the metre, the translator had, as in all other poetical passages of the work, to renounce this adornment, and be contented with occasional alliterations and assonances.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I came in a night of deepest darkness, black of locks, upon a fire kindled on a mountain-top, and giving tidings of

liberality, and it was a night whose sky was cold, her bosom closely buttoned, veiled her stars and her misty gloom heaped up. I was colder in it than the eye of the chameleon, and a mangy goat, so I urged on my sturdy camel, saying "Hail to thee and my own soul!" until the kindler [of the fire] spied my person and became aware of my speedy faring, when he came down in hot haste, and indited in the rejez metre:

"Long life to thee, groping along thy nightly way, whom sheen of fire has shown, nay, brought him as a gift,
To one of ample bounty and of vast abode, who welcomes, as the miser welcomes golden coin,
Nightfarers seeking hospitable fare and who evades not visitors with 'not at home,'
No tardy one to entertain in friendly guise a guest, when all the ground is bound with wintry cold,
And storm-portending stars are stingy with their rain. Well is he wont to ward against the ills of time:
He gathers ashes, sharpens knives, and never fails, be it in daytime or at night, at morn or eve,
To slaughter well-fed camels, and to kindle fire."

Then he accosted me with the countenance of the bashful and clasped my hands with the clasp of the generous, and led me into a house whose camels roared, whose cauldrons boiled, whose slave-girls carried provisions, whose trays went round, and along the sides thereof were guests dragged hither by him who had dragged me, and moulded in my mould, who were culling (enjoying) the fruit of winter and rejoicing with the glee of those endowed with youthful vigour. So I joined the place where they warmed themselves, and found with them the pleasure which the inebriated finds in wine; and when embarrassment had passed away and the cold was gone, trays were brought to

us like lunar halos in roundness, and like gardens adorned with flowers which were laden with the victuals of festive banquets, and well fenced against [the fault-finding or cavil of] the blamer and caviller [or fault-finder]. Then we spurned what is said about gluttony, and saw sense in plunging into it, until, when we had meted to ourselves with the measure of the greedy and come nigh the risk of indigestion, we had handed to us napkins to wipe off the odour of food, whereupon we settled in the seats of night-talk and every one of us began to wag his tongue and to display what he had in his show-case, except an old man whose side-locks were hoary, both whose upper garments were tattered, for he crouched apart and kept far aloof from us. So his reserve, the motive for which was incomprehensible, and which would have excused anyone who censured him, angered us, save that we softened our speech to him and were afraid to encroach on him by questioning, and each time we wished him to overflow as we overflowed, and to launch out in what we launched out, he turned aside as the lofty turns aside from the lowly and quoted: "Verily this is nought but idle tales of the ancients" (Koran, vi. 25, and *passim*). Presently it was as though shame had smote him, and the forbidding soul had whispered to him, for he crept up and came nigh, putting away his fastidiousness and exerting himself to make amends for what had gone before. Then he begged a hearing from the night-talkers, and broke forth like the coursing torrent, saying:

"Marvels I know, seen by me, and told without any lie, for not in vain am I called the father of wonderment:

Folks have I seen, O my folk, that on a crone's juice are fed; not, notice well, mean I though the daughter of grapes by her.

(*baulu 'l-'ajûz*, lit. *urina anus*, is a popular idiom for "cow's milk"; *al-'ajûz*, old woman, means also "choice old wine.")

And Arabs, at famine's time, who relished as dainty food, a roasted rag, and allayed indeed therewith hunger's pangs;

(*khirqah*, a tatter, a rag, and also a swarm of locusts.)

And powerful men I saw, who said when things went amiss, or when they did carelessly their work: 'It was fuel's fault';

(*qâdir*, who is able, strong, powerful, and also "who cooks food in the kettle," *qidr*, when it is called *qadîr*.)

And scribes whose hands never wrote a letter in all their lives, and who read not any more aught of what is writ in books;

(*kâtib*, one who writes, a clerk, a scribe, and also "a cobler, a mender of water-bags," etc.)

And people who in their flight in eagle's wake sped along, although they were heavily arrayed in helmet and steel;

(*uqâb*, a black eagle, and also "a standard": Mohammed's standard was called *al-'uqâb*.)

And gathered folks, men of worth, to whom appeared suddenly a noble dame and they turned away, to flee far from her;

(*nabîlah*, a lady of distinction, and also "carrion," whence the phrase *tanabbala 'l-ba'îr*, the camel became putrid, *i.e.*, died.)

And eke a troop, who for sure have never seen Mecca's fane and yet had made pilgrimage on camel's back without doubt;

(*ḥajjat juṣîyan*, they performed the pilgrimage sitting crosswise [on their camels], and also "they got the better in argument in that posture," *juṣîy*, being the plural of *jâṣî*, one who sits crosswise.)

And women-folks faring from Aleppo all through the night who came to Kâẓimah-town at morn without weariness.

(*ṣabbaḥna kâẓimat-an*, they reached in the morning Kâẓimah, a town in the dependency of Basra, and also "they wished good-morning to a woman silent with anger.")

And people from Kâẓimah who faring forth during night found in Aleppo themselves about the time morning dawned.

(*aṣbaḥû fî ḥalab*, they arrived in the morning in Aleppo [far distant from the former town], and also "they passed the morning in milking.")

A youth I saw who for sure had never touched lady fair, and yet he had progeny to keep alive name and race.

(*naslun min al 'aqib*, progeny of surviving children, and "also an enemy at his heels.")

Again one hoary not hiding ever his hoariness, who in the desert appeared still young of years, far from grey.

(*shâ'ibun ghaira mukhfin li 'l-mashîb*, one hoary who conceals not the hoariness, and also "one who mixes milk [with water] and makes no secret of the milk thus mixed.")

One suckled with mother-milk, not lisping yet with his lips, I saw him in hot dispute amidst a brawl loud and fierce.

(*fî shijârin baina 's-sabab*, in contention between arguments or revilings, and also "in an [open] camel-litter between the cords"; to the latter meaning of *sabab* Ḥarîri quotes Koran, xxii. 15: "let him stretch a cord to heaven.")

And one who sowed millet once, and when it came to be cut, it turned, for sooth, jujube shrub, which merry men dearly love.

(*al-ghubairâ'*, an intoxicating liquor prepared from millet, also called *sakrakah*, of which a tradition says: "beware of the ghubairâ', it is the wine of the world," and also the Arabic name of the plant *Zizypha rubra Gilanensis*.)

And one who was bound and rode upon a horse also bound, but never ceased all the while to fare along amblingly.

(*maghlûl*, put in chains, fettered, bound, and *ghulla*, he was bound, have also the meaning "thirsty," and "he was suffering from thirst.")

And one I saw, free of hand, who led a fine saddle-beast, in haste, although captive and a brother of misery.

(*ma'sûr*, one taken captive, made prisoner of war, and also "one suffering from strangury.")

One sitting, while walking, and with whom his beast fell aground, though strange it seem what I tell, yet it admits naught of doubt.

(*jâlis*, one who is seated, and also "one who makes for Najd"; *mâshî*, a pedestrian, and also "owner of cattle," in which latter sense some commentators explain *imshû*, in Koran, lxvii. 15, as a prayer in behalf of mankind for abundance of cattle and prosperity.)

A weaver too, both his hands cut off, I saw, deaf and dumb, if this you deem marvellous, well, wonders will never cease.

(*ḥâ'ik*, a weaver, and also "one who in walking moves his shoulders, and keeps his feet far apart.")

One straight of build met I once, whose stature rose like a lance, on Mina mount, who complained to me of back-crookedness.

(*al-ḥadab*, being hump-backed, and also "rough rising ground".)

One who exerted himself in giving all creatures joy, yet cheering them thought a sin like lying or tyranny.

(*ifrâḥ*, rendering cheerful, and also "burdening with debts," as in the saying of Mohammed: "There is none left in Islâm

burdened with debt [*mufraḥ*] whose debt has not been paid.")

And one who loved people to commune with him secretly, but never had any need for converse with humankind.

(*ḥadîṯu 'l-ḵẖalq*, conversation with created beings, and also "the telling of a lie," as in Koran *passim*: "this is but a lying tale of the ancients.")

One scrupulous who redeemed always his word faithfully, lacked none the less conscience according to Arab ways.

(*ẕimâm*' conscientiousness, and also pl. of *ẕimmah*, "a well with scanty water," when the words translated "according to Arab ways" would have to be taken in the sense of "on the road of the Arabs," meaning in the desert.)

One full of strength, never was there yieldingness seen in him, his softness was manifest withal, and quite unconcealed.

(*lîn*, softness, smoothness, yieldingness, and also "a palm-tree or plantation," whence Koran, lix. 5: "your cutting down some of their palm-trees.")

And one prostrating himself on camel's back, unconcerned at what he did, thinking it an act of prime piety.

(*faḥl*, a vigorous camel-stallion, and also "a mat made of the leaves of a male palm-tree" [*fuḥḥâl*].)

One who excuses, and pains him whose excuse he accepts, though coaxingly, while in screams is he who thus is excused.

(*âẕir*, one who accepts another man's excuses, and also a "circumciser"; *ma'ẕûr*, one excused, and also "a boy being circumcised.")

A town I saw, waterless for him who would scoop a draught, though water flows over it with torrent's rush many times.

(*baldah*, a city, town, district, and also "the space between the eyebrows," which is also called *buljah*.)

A village too, less in size than any nest built by birds, in which there lived Dailamites on plunder and robbery.

(*qaryah*, a village, and also an ant-hill; *daîlam*, name of a people in Gîlân and extended to non-Arabs in general, and also "a swarm of ants"; *ḵẖulsatu's-salab*, sudden robbery, and also "bark of a tree.")

A star I saw, when it shows, a man is no longer seen, as though a veil covered him, a veil that naught penetrates.

(*kaukab*, a star, and also "a white speck in the eye producing blindness"; *insân*, man, and also metaphorically "the pupil of the eye.")

A ball of dung, highly prized as part of one's property, the owner though recks it not by any means much of wealth.

(*rausah*, the excrement of any hoofed animal, and also "the tip of the nose.")

A platter of purest gold, I saw it bought after much hard bargaining for a grain, a solitary silver grain.

(*nuzâr*, pure gold, and also "wood of the *na'b* tree," of which trays, cups, bows, and similar objects are made.)

One gathering poppy-seed to ward from him off the foes assailing him, and he was not disappointed therein.

(*khashkhâs*, the plant called *abû 'n-naum*, father of sleep, *i.e.*, poppy, and also a troop of armed and armoured men.)

And oftentimes passed me by a dog in whose mouth there was a bull, but know ye, it was a bull without any tail.

(*saur*, a bullock, a bull, and also "a piece of soft cheese.")

How many an elephant, I swear it, has seen my eye on camel's back, perched upon a saddle and saddle-bags.

(*fîl*, an elephant, and also "a man of weak intellect, a dolt".)

How many a man I met complaining in desert-tracts, and no complaint uttered he in earnest or pleasantry.

(*mushtakî*, one who complains, and also "one who uses the small water-bag, called *shakwah*.)

A pitcher I saw again, a shepherd's girl in the wold was owning it, and it looked with twain of eyes bright as stars.

(*karrâz*, a pitcher with a narrow neck [the Qâmûs reads the word in this meaning *kurrâz*], and also "a he-goat on whose horns a herdsman carries his utensils.")

How often times saw my eye two springs the water whereof, though in Aleppo they were, was flowing from farthest West.

(*al-gharb*, the distant West, applied to Maghrib or West Africa, and also "the lachrymal gland"; *'ain*, a fountain, source, spring, and also "the eye.")

And one who pierces with spears, although his hands never held a lance, and he never leaped against a foe charging him.

(*qanâ*, pl. of *qanât*, a lance, a spear, and also "an aquiline nose," applied to which *sada'bi-hi* means "he disclosed or uncovered it.")

How many times came I to a land without any palms, and on the morrow I saw dates newly grown in their sheaths.

(*busr*, dates beginning to ripen, and also "rain-water lately fallen"; *qulub*, pl. of *qalb*, pith of the palm-tree, and also of *qalîb*, "a well.")

How often a spacious tray in desert tracts have I seen, that in the air was on wing and swooping down from on high.

(*ṭabaq*, a large tray, and also "a swarm of locusts.")

How many old men I saw that lived in this world for aye, and who, I ask you, escaped destruction at any time?

(*mukhallid*, one who lasts eternally, and also "one whose hoariness is slow to come.")

How many wild beasts I met complaining of hunger's pangs with fluent speech and a tongue more piercing than cutting swords.

(*waḥsh*, a dumb brute, a wild beast, and also "a famished man.")

How often one who had eased his bowels called me and talked to me, and nor he nor I in manners were lacking aught.

(*mustanjî*, one who cleans himself after evacuation, and also one who sits on an elevated place [*najwah*].)

How oft I made kneel my beast beneath a pomegranate-bud that would have shaded no end of 'Ajam [*i.e.*, foreign] and Arab men.

(*junbuẓah*, the flower or bud of a pomegranate, a bud in general, and also "a dome, a cupola"; *'urub*, here probably by poetical license for *'urb*, Arabs, may also be taken as pl. of *'arûb*, "a woman fond of her husband," as in Koran, lvi. 36: "loving their spouses, of equal age with them.")

How oft I saw one rejoiced a little while, and his tears were seen to fall freely as the drops of rain from a cloud.

(*surra*, he was filled with joy, and also "his navel-string was cut," the remaining part being called *surrah*, navel.)

How often times have I seen a shirt that hurt badly him who owned it maiming his limbs, unnerving him thoroughly.

(*qamîṣ*, a shirt or vest, and also "a beast given to jumping and rearing.")

How many a veil there is, if time but would make away with it, I trow numerous wayfarers would stay at home.

(*izâr*, a wrapper or veil covering the upper part of the body, and also used metaphorically for "woman.")

So far, and how many more of wondrous arts owns my mind, and sallies of pleasing wit, and sayings choice, sweet to hear.

So if you are quick to seize the drift of words, you will find that all is true and my bloom leads you to guess at my fruit.

But if you are baffled, then the fault, forsooth, lies with him who knows not how to discern 'twixt sandal and common wood."

Said Al Ḥarîth, son of Hammâm: Then we began to

grapple with his verse, and the explanation of the riddles proposed by him, while he made game of us as the careless makes game of the perplexed, saying: "It is not thy nest, so get thee gone!" until the birth proved too difficult and the debarment complete. Therefore we thrust the lead on him, and asked him for enlightenment, and we were suspended between hope and despair, he saying: "The coaxing before the call for milking." So we knew him to be one of those who want a return for their gift, and expect a bribe for their judgment. Now it galled him who had given us shelter, that we should be exposed to a mulct, or ignominiously frustrated; accordingly the lord of the mansion sent for a camel of the breed of 'Id, and a robe like Sa'id's, and said to him: "Take them both as a lawful property, and levy not from my guests [even] a trifle for a forfeit." Said he: "I testify that this is a disposition like Akhzam's and liberality like Hâtim's." Thereupon he approached us with a countenance whose serenity was translucent and whose brightness beaming, and said: "O my people, the night is well-nigh gone, and drowsiness has got the victory, so betake yourselves to the sleeping-places, and snatch the repose of the sleeper, so that ye may sip a draught of refreshing rest and rise invigorated, when ye will understand that which is explained to you, and things difficult will become easy." Then every one approved of his opinion, and laid himself down on the pillow of his slumber. Now when the lids were closed in sleep and the guests had fallen a-doze, he sprang to the camel, and straightway saddled her; then he mounted her and started her on the journey, saying, addressing her:

"Serûj, my camel, is thy goal, so fare apace, now through the night, now through the day, now day and night,

So that thy hoofs may gladly tread her pastures moist and thou mayst find thee thence well off and prosperous,

And safe of being jaded over hill and dale: ay haste thee on, my precious beast, and speed thy pace,

Crossing the flinty mountains, peak by peak, contented with a chance draught from the wat'ring pond,

And not alighting until yonder goal is reached; for I have sworn it, and in earnest made my oath

By worship due to Mecca's lofty-pillared house, if thou but bring me safely to my native town

Thou wilt for aye be held by me instead of child."

Said the narrator: Then I knew that it was the Serûji, who when he had sold out, was wont to start off, and when he had filled his bushel, to decamp, and as soon as the dawn of the morrow broke and the sleepers recovered from their sleep, I informed them that at the time when unconsciousness had overcome them, the Shaykh had given them the slip for good, and mounted his camel and departed. Then a fresh vexation took hold of them after vexations of old, and they forgot the good of him for his bad. Thereupon we disbanded in all directions, and went away under every star of heaven.

THE FORTY-FIFTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF RAMLAH."

Once more Abû Zayd appears, together with his young wife, in a Court of Justice, this time that of the Kadi of Ramlah, on the plea of seeking redress for their matrimonial grievances. The first instance of their quarrels was contained in the ninth Assembly, and Rückert, in his free translation, or rather imitation of Ḥarîri in German, has very skilfully interwoven the two compositions into one. The same subject we have seen treated from a different point of view in the fortieth, called "of Tebriz," and as both the ninth and

fortieth are much more elaborate than the present one, it seems to me highly probable that this Assembly is what we would call the first sketch or preliminary study to the two former, which he may have thought fit to insert here, among some of the most artificial and carefully finished of his compositions, because its comparative simplicity and soberness endows it with a particular charm of its own by way of contrast.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I had gathered it from men of experiences, that travel is a mirror of marvels, wherefore I ceased not crossing every desert, and braving every danger, so that I might bring into my reach everything wonderful. Now amongst the finest sights I ever enjoyed, and the strangest adventures that I reckoned pleasant, was that I found myself in the presence of the Kadi of Ramlah,—and he one of the lords of wealth and power,—when there had appealed to him a worn wight in worn raiment, and a fair one in faded finery. The old man was minded to speak, and explain the object of his suit, but the wench cut short his peroration, and checked his bark. Then she removed from her face the flap of kerchief and indited with the tongue of an impudent shrew:

"O Kadi of Ramlah, in whose hands there is for us the date or else the hot cinder-coal,

To thee complain I of my mate's cruelty, who pays his pilgrim's duty but once a while:

Would that, when his devotion has come to end, and eased his back is after his pebble-throw,

He followed Abû Yûsuf's wise rule and wont to join the lesser with the chief pilgrimage.

This is his way in spite of that since he first took me to him I never crossed him in aught.

So bid him show me henceforth sweet kindliness, or make him drink the bitter draught of divorce,

Before he puts from him the last shred of shame, obedient to old Abû 'l-Murrah's hest."

Then the Kadi said to him: "Thou hast heard what she lays at thy door and with what she threatens thee, so turn aside from that which disgraces thee and beware to anger her and come to grief." Thereupon the Shaykh crouched on his knees and poured forth the springs of his utterances, saying:

"Listen, thou whom no blame may reach, to the speech of one who clears himself of doubts cast on him:

By Allah, not from hatred turn I from her, nor has my heart's love for my spouse died away,

But fortune's fitful freak has come over us, ruthlessly robbing us of both pearl and bead.

So my abode is empty, as unadorned her neck you see by shell or gold ornament.

Erewhile my views on love and his creed and cult were those professed so staunchly by 'Uẓrah's tribe,

But since fell fortune fled I left dolls alone, like one who vows chastity for caution's sake,

And not from grudge held I aloof from my field, only from fear to see the seed spring in halm.

So blame not one who in such plight finds himself, rather be kind to him and bear with his talk."

Said the narrator: Then the woman flared up at his speech and unsheathed arguments to fight him, saying: "Woe betide thee, thou fool, thou lack-food and lack-a-lance, makest thou a fuss about a child, when for every grazing creature there is a pasture-ground? Forsooth, thy understanding has strayed, and thy arrow missed its aim: thou art a wretch, and thy spouse is wretched through thee." Said the Kadi to her: "As for thee, if thou wert to wrangle with Khansâ', she would go away from thee silenced, but as for him, if he is truthful in his assertion and his alleged poverty, there is enough in his concern for his growling entrails, to make him forget his pendulum." Then she dropped her head,

looking askance, and returning no reply, so that we said, shame has come back to her, or victory has encompassed her. Then the Shaykh said to her: "Out on thee, if thou hast tinselled thy speech or concealed that which is full well known to thee." Said she: "Alas, is there concealment after appeal, and remains to us a seal upon any secret? There is neither of us, but says that which is true and tears the veil of modesty in speaking out: so would that we had been visited with dumbness, and not repaired to the judge." Thereupon she covered herself with her kerchief, and pretended to weep at her exposure. But the Kadi began to wonder at their address, and to admire it, and to blame fortune and lament over it on their behalf, whereupon he brought forth of dirhems two thousand, saying: "Content therewith the two hollows, and resist the mischief-maker between two friends." So the twain thanked him for the handsome way in which he had dismissed them and departed [as united] as though they were wine and water. After they had gone, and their persons were at a distance, the Kadi began to praise their cultured minds, and to ask: "Is there anyone who knows them?" Then the foremost of his henchmen and the most particular of his intimates said to him: "As for the Shaykh, he is the Serûji, to whose excellence all the world witnesses, and as for the woman she is his travelling consort, but as for their litigation, it is a wile of his device, and one of the hunting-nets of his deceit." The Kadi was angered at what he heard, and burned with rage to see how he was cheated. Accordingly he said to the informer against them: "Get thee up, and

spy for the pair of them, then pursue and chase them." So he rose, shaking his limbs defiantly, and after a while he returned, defeated. Said the Kadi to him: "Let us know what thou hast unearthed, and conceal not from us aught of vileness thou hast found out." He replied: "I ceased not following up the roads, and trying to overcome all obstructions, until I perceived them entering the desert, and they had already bridled the beast of separation, when I excited their eagerness for a second draught, and pledged myself for their obtaining [the object of] their hope; but the Shaykh's heart was disposed to take a despairing view of the case, and said: "Flight with Kurâb (name of a celebrated horse) is wiser," while she said: "Nay, rather the return is praiseworthier, and cowardice is weakly." Now when the Shaykh saw clearly the foolishness of her notion, and the risk of her venturesomeness, he took hold of her skirts, whereupon he indited, saying to her:

"Take my advice, and follow its guarded way, and let the sum suffice thee for details:
Fly from the date-tree when thou hast had thy pick, and separate for good from it henceforth,
Bewaring to return to it even though its keeper made it free to all comers,
For best a thief should not be seen in a spot where he has given proof of his cunning."

Whereupon he said to me: "Thou hast taken trouble in that which thou hast been bid to do: so return to whence thou hast come, and say to him who has sent thee, if thou wilt:

"Eh, gently, let not bounty be followed by injury, for else both thy wealth and fame alike will be lost and gone,

And fly not into passion if a beggar exaggerates, for he is by no means first to polish and gloss his speech,

And if some deceit of mine is taken by thee amiss, remember, Abû Mûsá before thee has been deceived."

Said the Kadi to him: "Allah confound him! how charming are his ways and how exquisite his arts!" Then he sent off his spy with two mantles and a purse full of coin, saying to him: "Fare speedily like one who turns neither right nor left, until thou seest the Shaykh and the wench, and moist their hands with this gift, and show to them how fain I am to be beguiled by the learned." Quoth the narrator: Now in all my wanderings abroad, I never saw a sight as wonderful as this, nor heard I the like of it from anyone who roved about and roamed through the lands.

THE FORTY-SIXTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF ALEPPO."

After a prolonged stay in Aleppo, Ḥârith passes on his return journey through Ḥims (Emessa), a place noted for the stupidity of its inhabitants, like Abdera among the Greeks, or Schildburg in Germany. Here he meets with a schoolmaster, instructing, in the open air, his pupils, and, expecting to be entertained by the blunders of teacher and disciples, he draws near to assist at the lesson or class, as we would term it, when he finds to his astonishment that the lads are able to accomplish the most surprising feats. "One of them," to quote once more Mr. Chenery's succinct summary, "recites a poem consisting entirely of unpointed letters; the next writes out some which not only have every letter pointed, but are full of assonances and alliterations; a third produces lines of which the words consist alternately of pointed and unpointed letters; a fourth gives verses in which there is *tejnîs*, or homogeneity in sound or in letters between each two successive words; the next produces a couplet each line of which begins and ends with the same syllables. Then the nature of the exercises changes, and some lines are given containing words which ought to be written with the letter Sîn, but

about which some Arabs are doubtful. Then come the words which should be written with Ṣâd; then those that may be written with either. One pupil gives in verse the rules for writing the verb whose last letter is weak. Another repeats a poem comprising all the words in the language which contain ẓ; this table is especially useful since a common mistake among the Arabs was to confound ẓ with ẓ [Chenery gives the two letters in Arabic characters, but would transliterate the second one by ḍ, as in "Tumâḍir," vol. i., p. 387], the old Semitic language having a less variety of sounds than the cultivated Arabic, as may be seen by a comparison with the Hebrew. It need not be said that the schoolmaster is Abû Zayd."

The linguistic artifices mentioned above, like those which have preceded in former Assemblies, defy the resources of the translator. Rückert, in his spirited and ingenious imitation of Ḥarîri, substitutes similar feats in German, giving for instance a number of verses, in which the sounds respectively of *g* and *ch* (as pronounced in Scotch) change entirely the meaning of certain words; another piece, in which the leading words are only distinguished by *d* and *t* alternately; a third, in which the meaning of words is altered by eliminating the letter *s*, and so on, with an astonishing amount of inventiveness. My less ambitious object being to render the Original into English as faithfully as the difference between the two idioms will allow, I had to content myself, like Chenery in similar cases before me, with simply translating the wording of the text. The memorial verses on Arabic orthography, however, I have tried in a certain measure to reproduce because I thought that it might be a useful exercise for the student to learn them by heart. The insertion of Arabic vocables in transliteration of needs increased the number of lines in these pieces, and, as the last of them is rather long, I give only half of it in full for fear of exhausting the patience of the general reader, relegating the remainder of the words, together with their explanation, to the Notes.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: An overpowering longing and a most ardent desire carried me to Aleppo, and at that time my back was light and I quick of execution; so I took travelling gear and sped thither with the speed of the bird, and ever since I had put up at her dwellings, and was enjoying her spring

season, I ceased not to while away my days in all that which satisfies the wish and quenches thirst, until my heart had no longer power to addict itself to aught, and the raven of separation took wing after his alighting. Then my mind, free of care and sweet wilfulness [sprightliness], urged me to make for Ḥims (Emessa), so as to pass the summer in her territory and to sound the [proverbial] stupidity of the people of her soil. So I hastened towards her with the swiftness of the shooting-star when it falls to stone [the listening devils]. Now when I had pitched my tent in her boundary, and found the fragrance of her breeze, my eye spied a Shaykh whose old age was coming on and whose youth had turned its back on him, and around him ten youngsters of one root and of diverse roots, and I yielded to my eagerness to approach him, so that I might probe in him the learned folks of Ḥims. Thereupon he met me with a cheerful face and greeted me with [even] a handsomer greeting than I had given him. Then I sat down with him to test the fruit of his speech, and to fathom the essence of his clownishness. Forthwith he tarried not to point with his little staff to the oldest of his chicks, and said to him: "Indite the unadorned couplets, and beware of keeping us waiting." Then he crouched as the lion croucheth, and indited without hesitation:

"Make ready for thy enviers' weapons sharp, but kindly deal with him who sets hope in thee,

Cut off thyself from play, avoid wantonness, but ply the camels and the brown supple spears,

Strive to obtain a lofty place, pillared high, not to enrobe thyself in gay dalliance,

For lordship means, by Allah, not quaffing wine, nor gain you glory courting girls full of hip,

Hail to one free of hand and mind, large of heart, whose only joy is giving joy to the good,

His water-pond is sweet to those seeking it, nor waste his wealth, when one in need begs for it,

Expectant hope is not refused at his door, and not put off: delaying hope deems he vile.

He follows not the call of loose sportiveness, nor is the winecup ever seen in his palm,

Stern discipline and self-reproof make him rule over his heart and master his lust and greed,

And praise he wins through knowing that one-eyed wives are not endowed alike with wives sound of sight."

Said he (the Shaykh) to him (the boy:) "Thou hast done well, O thou little full-moon, O thou head of the fraternity," whereupon he said to the next, who seemed to be a brother of the former, "Come near, O Nuwairah (my little luminary), my moonlet of the little halo." Then he came nigh and tarried not, until he was as close to him as the receiver of a gift, when the Shaykh said to him: "Display the bridal couplets, even though they be not of the choicest." Then he mended his reed-pen, and nibbed it, whereupon he took the tablet in his lap and wrote:

"Fair Tajannî has maddened me and bewitched me with her thousands of wily tricks and beguilements,

Has enamoured me with the droop of her eyelids, as a doe's, draining mine of tears through her love-charm.

She approached me, adorned and richly attired, and crazed my senses with forms that gleam through her movements;

Then I fancied she favoured me and would soothe me by her speech, but an idle dream proved my fancy.

After using with me her heart's cruel falsehood, like one faithless, who would appease rightful anger,

She forsook me, and let me go, softly weeping, and in sorrow that ceaselessly breedeth sorrow."

When the Shaykh looked at that which the boy had deftly devised, and scanned attentively that which he

had written down, he said to him: "A blessing has been bestowed on thee amongst the fawns, as there has been a blessing bestowed on yonder olive-tree." Then he called out: "Step nigh, O Qutrub." Forthwith approached him a lad, resembling a star of a dark night or the likeness of an ivory-figure, whereupon he said to him: "Put this into mongrel couplets (the alternate words of which consist of dotted and undotted letters), and avoid blunders." Then the boy took the reed-pen and wrote:

"Be bountiful, bounty is a jewel, and disappoint none who hopes for shelter;
Refuse not him who implores assistance, be he prolix in his suit, or modest;
And think not that time will leave for ever the miser to starve upon his riches;
Be lenient: men of worth condemn not, their hearts expand with the joy of giving;
Betray no trustworthy friend and crave not for coin that, when tested, proves deficient."

Said the Shaykh to him: "May thy hands not wither nor thy knives get blunted." Then he called out: "O Ghashamsham, O thou [essence of the] perfume of Mausham." Forthwith there stood ready to his bidding a lad like the pearl of the diver, or the young buffalo of the hunter, when he said to him: "Write down the twin-couplets, and may no mishap befall thee." Then the boy took from him the straightened reed, and penned without stopping:

"Zaynab's stature, erect and lithe, kills beholders, and a bane is her rounded bosom to lovers,
Helping hosts are her neck to her, and her grace, and languid eyes that dart glances of deadly sharpness,
Proudly bearing herself she swayed full-blown power, now my foe, now with glowing cheeks drawing nigh me

In the morn or at night, to leave me again in sore distress at the cruelty of her doings,

Then she came, may I be her ransom, and cooed, and with her greetings appeased her lovelorn and loved one."

Thereupon the Shaykh began to scan carefully that which the boy had set into lines, and let his glance run over it, and when he had found his writing beautiful and his punctuation correct, he said to him: "May thy ten [fingers] not dry up, nor thy odour be found foul." Then he called a lad of bewitching looks, who [on removing his face-veil] displayed blossoms of a garden, and said to him: "Recite the two bordered couplets, that silence every speaker, and are sure not to be matched by a third." Said the boy to him: "Listen! and may thy hearing never become hard, nor thy collected senses be scattered," and recited without tarrying and without delay:

"Make thee a mark, whose traces show fair to sight, give thanks for gifts, though trifling as sesam-seed,

And shun deceitfulness with all might and main, that thou mayst gain thee lordship and weight with men."

Said he to him: "Thou hast excelled, O imp, O father of despoilment." Then he called out: "Propound, O Yâsîn, that which is difficult of words written with Sîn." Thereupon he rose and tarried not to indite with a nasal voice:

"In *niqs*, which means 'writing-ink,' and *nasgh*, 'the wrist of the hand,' the Sîn is used whether they be written or read aloud.

"And so in *qasb* 'hard' (of dates), and *bâsiqah* 'lofty palm,' in *safḥun* 'foot of a mount,' in *bakhs* 'defect,' *iqsir* 'force!'

In *iqtabis* 'borrow fire!' *taqassast* 'I heard it said,' *musaiṭir* 'custodian,' *shamûs* 'unbroke,' *jaras* 'bell.'

Qarîs, or else *qâris* 'cold'; learn this from me as correct, lighting thy torch at the fire of knowledge sound and approved."

Said he to him: "Thou hast done well, O unrest, O cymbal-beater of the troop." Then he said: "Get thee up, O 'Anbasah (a name of the lion) and explain the Sâds that are [vulgarly] confounded with Sîn." Thereupon he leaped up with the leap of the roused lion-whelp, and forthwith indited without stumbling:

"With Ṣâd is written *qabaṣt* 'I took with the finger-tips,' and *aṣikh* 'be listening that thou may'st receive the news,'

And *baṣaqt* 'I spat,' and *ṣimâkh* 'the ear,' and *ṣanjah* 'cymbal,' and *qaṣṣ* and *ṣadr* 'the breast,' *iqtaṣṣ* 'he traced.'

Bakhaṣt 'I gouged his eye,' and *furṣah* 'the proper time,' and *furîṣah* 'muscles beneath the arm that quake in fear.'

And *qaṣartu Hindan.* 'I guarded Hind,' *fiṣḥu 'n-naṣârá* 'paschal feast of the Christians who look out for it,'

And *qaraṣt* 'I pinched,' and the wine is *qârîṣah*, 'tart of taste,' when it pricks the tongue, and all this is orthography."

Said he: "Allah keep thee, O my son, thou hast indeed given coolness to both my eyne." Then he bade get up one small of body as a chess-pawn, and swift of motion as a falcon, and commanded him to stick to his way, and rehearse the words that are differently written with Sîn or Ṣâd. Then the boy rose, trailing his coat-flaps, and forthwith indited, gesticulating with both his hands:

"If so thou wilt write with Sîn, the words I will tell to thee, and if thou wilt, let them be correctly written with Ṣâd:

Maghs 'gripes,' and *faqs* 'breeding young,' *musṭâr* 'new wine,' *mummalis*

'Slipped from the hand,' *sâligh* 'shedding teeth,' *sirâṭ* 'path of truth,'

Saqab 'approach,' *sâmighân* 'the corners twain of the mouth,'

Saqr 'hawk,' *sawîq* 'wheat in broth,' *miṣlâq* 'glib-tongued': thus they teach."

Said he to him: "Well done, O thou mite, O thou eye of a fly." Then he called out: "O Daghfal (young

elephant), O Abû Zanfal (father of mischief)." Forthwith a boy stood ready to his bidding, fairer than an [ostrich's] egg on the green-sward. Then he said to him: "What is the rule with regard to the spelling of the verbs terminating in a weak letter?" He replied: "Listen, may thy echo never be deaf, nor thy enemies endowed with hearing," whereupon he indited, needing no prompter:

"If ever thou art doubtful of spelling a final weak, then put such a verb into the second of preterite:
If its Tâ is preceded by Yâ, let a Yâ it be, if not, put an Alif last, in order to write it right:
And think not that verbs of three or more letters of this class, or such as contain a Hamzah, will differ in that respect."

The Shaykh rejoiced at that which the boy had propounded, saying to him: "I commend thee to the protection of Allah from the eye of the envier, and fain would be made thy ransom," whereupon he said: "Hither, O Ḳa'ḳâ', O thou bird, cautious as to where thou sippest water." Then came forward a lad brighter than the fire of hospitality in the eyes of the son of night-faring. He said to him: "Explain the distinction between Ẓâd and Ẓâ so as to cleave thereby the hearts of the adversaries." The boy bestirred himself gleefully at his speech, and forthwith indited with a loud voice:

"Thou who askest about the two letters Ẓâd and Ẓâ, in order to make no error in writing:
Let suffice thee to know by heart those in Ẓâ, so hear them like a man wide awake and retain them,
Namely *ẓamyâ* 'with blackish lips,' *al-maẓâlim* 'plaints for justice,' *iẓlâm* 'producing obscureness,'
Ẓalm 'the whiteness of teeth,' *ẓubâ* 'points of weapons,' *al-laḥâẓ* 'the eye-corner next to the temples,'
And *'aẓâ* 'kind of lizards,' and *aẓ-ẓalîm* 'male of the ostrich,' or 'wronged,' and also 'the wronger,'

Ẓabyun,' antelope,' *shaiẓam* ' tall,' *ẓill* ' a shadow,' and *laẓá* ' blaze,' *shiwâẓ* ' a flame burning smokeless,'

Aṭ-ṭaẓannî ' opinion,' *al-lafẓ* ' the word,' and *nam* ' a poem,' and *aṭ-ṭaqrîẓ* ' panegyric,'

Qaiẓ ' the summer,' *ẓumá* ' athirst,' and *lamâẓ* ' taste on the tip of the tongue,' *ḥiẓá* ' shares of fortune,'

An-naẓîr ' what resembles,' *ẓîr* ' foster-mother,' *jâḥiẓ* ' goggling,' *an-naẓîrûn* ' the beholders,'

And *tashaẓẓî* ' a splitting up,' *ẓilf* ' the hoof of ruminants,' and *îqâẓ* ' awaking a sleeper,'

'Aẓm ' a bone,' and *ẓunbûb* ' the bone of the hip,' and *ash-shaẓâ* ' bone of arm or leg,' *ẓahr* ' the backside,'

Ash-shiẓâẓ ' yoke for carrying,' *ḥâfiẓûn* ' those who preserve,' *iḥfâẓ* ' provoking to anger,'

Al-ḥaẓîrât ' the lofts for dates,' *al-maẓannah* ' likely place where a thing is found,' *ẓinnah* ' notion,'

Kâẓimûn ' folks in silent wrath,' *al-waẓîfât* ' daily rations,' *mughtâẓ* ' enraged,' *kiẓẓah* ' surfeit.' "

Said the Shaykh to him: " Thou hast done well, may thy mouth never be harmed, nor he be benefited who speaks thee harshly, for, by Allah, thou art, despite thy tender youth, a safer keeper than the earth, and more of a collector than the day of mustering (resurrection). Now I have made thee and thy comrades drink from my pure draught, and have straightened you as spear-shafts are straightened, so think of me, and I will think of you, and give me thanks, and be not ungrateful." Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Then I wondered at what he had displayed of ingenuity blended with stolidness, and what he had shown of sagacity mingled with foolishness, and my glance ceased not to look up and down at him, and to scan and scrutinize him, but I was like one who tries to see in the dark, or who wanders in a trackless desert. So when he found my awakening tardy and my bewilderment evident, he blinked at me and smiled, saying: " There remains none who reads

features." Then I pondered as to the purport of his speech, when lo, I found him to be Abû Zayd by dint of his smile. Thereupon I began to blame him for making his home in a den of fools and choosing the trade of a clown. Then it was as if his face had been strewn with ashes, or imbued with blackness, save that he was not slow to indite:

"If Hims I have chosen, and trade as buffoon, it was to be blessed with the portion of fool-borns,
For *our* age selects but the fool for its favours, and houses its wealth in the pools of the hollows,
While brothers of wisdom obtain from their age not more than the donkey tied up in the courtyard."

Then he said: "But teaching is the most honourable of crafts, and the most profitable of merchandizes, the most successful of intercessions, and the most excellent of eminences, and its possessor is lord of a rule obeyed, and of awe widespread, and of a flock [subjects] submissive to his sway, he guards with the guardianship of a prince, and fixes allowances as a Wazîr fixes them, and ordains with the authority of the powerful, and resembles the owner of a great kingdom, save that in a short while he reaches his dotage, and becomes noted for far-famed foolishness, and shifts about with small wits in his dealings, and none can enlighten thee better [in this matter] than one who speaks from experience." Said I to him: "By Allah, thou art the son of the days and the pattern of patterns, and the wizard who beguiles understandings, who has access to every branch-path of speech." Thereupon I ceased not to attend at his assembly, and to plunge into the current of his river, until the bright days passed away and grey

events took their stead, when I separated from him with tears in my eyne.

THE FORTY-SEVENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF HAJR."

Another lively scene of fictitious altercation between Abû Zayd, who for once has assumed the popular character of a cupper, and his precocious son, for the purpose of replenishing their exhausted pockets. The chief merit of the composition lies again in the marvellous forcibleness and comprehensiveness of diction, which runs through all the notes of the oratorial scale, from outspoken vulgarity redeemed by an amusing touch of quaintness in the numerous proverbial sayings, to the enouncement of sublime moral precepts in the most elaborate forms of versification. To quote one instance of the latter, there is a poem of considerable length, the permanent rhyme of which consists of two words, consecutive words each time, of exactly the same sound, but totally different meaning, as: *Iẓâ mâ 'ltahabat aḥshâ'u-hu bi 't-ṭawá ṭawá*, "when his entrails burn with hunger (*ṭawá*), *he bears it silently*" (*ṭawá*). That Ḥarîri himself attached some value and importance to this Assembly, may be gathered from the fact, that he accompanied it with a short commentary of his own, the substance of which will be found embodied in the notes to this volume.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I needed a cupping, while I was staying in Hajr al-Yemâmeh, and accordingly was directed to a Shaykh who cupped skilfully. So I sent my slave-boy to summon him into my presence and kept waiting for him, but he was slow to return after he had gone, so that I began to fancy that he had run away, or met with accident after accident. Then he came back like one who has failed in his errand and disappointed his master. Said I to him: "Woe betide thee, for the tardiness of Find, and thy fire-shaft missing to give a spark." Then he pretended that the Shaykh was busier than the woman of

the two butter-bags and in the midst of a battle like the battle of Hunain. Now I loathed to go to a cupper's place, and I was at a loss between sallying forth and lagging behind. Finally I saw that there was no rebuke upon him who goes to the privy. Thereupon, when I had reached his shop and got sight of his face, I perceived an old man of cleanly aspect, surrounded by ring upon ring of onlookers and throng upon throng [of customers]. Before him stood a youth like [the sharp sword] Ṣamṣâmah, about to be cupped, the Shaykh saying to him: "I see thou hast stretched forth thy head, before thou bringest out thy scrap, and hast offered me thy nape without saying to me 'This is for thee.' But I am not of those who sell ready goods for owed money, nor look out for the shadow after the substance. So if thou dole out thy coin, thou wilt be cupped in both thy neck-veins, but if thou deem stinting better, and hoarding more becoming in thyself, then read the Sura, 'he frowned and turned away,' and vanish from out of my sight, or else——" Then the youth said: "By Him who has forbidden the forging of lies, as He has forbidden the chase in the two sacred precincts, I am more penniless than the babe two days old, so trust to the flow of my mountain slope, and grant me a delay until times have mended with me." Said the Shaykh to him: "Fair promises are like the shoot of a tree, that has an equal chance that it perish, or that the fresh date be gathered from it. So what will teach me, whether I am to reap fruit from thy tree, or to derive from it an ailment? Furthermore what relying is there that, when thou hast gotten thyself far away, thou wilt fulfil what thou promisest? For in sooth, treachery has become

as the whiteness in a horse's forefeet amongst the adornments of this generation, so rid me, by Allah, of thy bothering, and take thee off to where the wolf howls." Then the lad advanced towards him, overcome with shame, and said: "By Allah, none breaks faith, save the mean, the contemptible, and none resorts to the pond of treachery but the worthless, and if thou knewest who I am, thou wouldst not let me hear ribald talk; but thou hast spoken in ignorance, and where it behoved thee to prostrate thyself, thou hast foully aspersed, and how abject are exile and poverty, and how beautiful is the speech of him who said:

"The stranger, who trails his skirt pompously, meets but with scorn, how will he fare then abroad, if food and drink fail him?
But no distress brings disgrace upon the high-minded man: camphor and musk, well ye know, though pounded spread fragrance,
The ruby is often tried in Ghaḍa-fire's fiercest glow, the fire abates but the ruby still remains ruby."

Said the Shaykh to him: "O thou bane of thy father, who causest thy kindred to wail, art thou in a place to brag of, and of an account to be blazed forth? or in the place of a hide to be flayed, and of a nape to be cupped? And granted thy house be such as thou claimest, results therefrom the cupping of the hind-part of thy neck? By Allah, if thy father lorded it over Abd al-Manâf, or if 'Abd al-Madân humbled himself to thy maternal uncle, hammer not cold iron, and seek not that which thou wilt not find, and boast when thou boastest, of thy belongings, not of thy forefathers, and of thy gatherings, not of the roots from which thou springest, and of thy own qualities, not of thy rotten bones, and of thy valuables, not of thy pedigree. Yield not to thy ambition or it will abase thee [bring thee to fall], nor

follow thy lust lest it lead thee astray. I commend to Allah him who said to his son:

"Be upright, my dear son, for the straight tree will spread its roots, whereas, when it grows crooked it speedily pines away,

Obey not abasing greed, but behave as a man who bears in silence the pangs of hunger, that gnaw at his vital parts;

And battle against lust that destroys thee, for many who had soared to the stars, enslaved by lust, fell and came to grief.

Be helpful to thy kinsfolk, for shameful it is to see the pinch of distress in those depending upon the free.

And keep to the friend who when the times turn their back on thee, betrays not, but proves faithful, when matters go wrong with thee.

And pardon if thou art strong, for no good is in a man who needlessly wounds, when power of wounding is in his grasp

And guard thee of complaining, thou hearest no man of sense complain, but the fool, who snarls and growls while he checks himself."

Then the lad said to the onlookers: "How wonderful! What a strange rarity! the nose in the sky and the rump in the water; words sweet as wine and deeds hard as flint stone." Then he assailed the Shaykh with a sharp tongue and in burning rage, saying: "Out upon thee for a fashioner of fine speeches, who swerves from the road of kindliness. Thou preachest benevolence and actest with the ruthlessness of the cat. And if the briskness of thy trade is the cause of thy crustiness, then may Allah strike it with slackness and allow it to be spoiled by thy enviers, until thou art seen more bereft of customers than the cupper of Sâbâṭ, and narrower, as far as thy livelihood is concerned, than the eye of the needle." Said the Shaykh to him: "Nay, may Allah visit thee with blisters all over thy mouth, and heat of the blood, until thou art driven to a cupper of mighty roughness, heavy in charges, with blunt

cupping-knives, snotty and breaking wind at every moment." Now, when the youth saw that he was complaining to one who would not be silenced, and intent on opening a door that would be kept locked, he desisted from bandying words and made ready for departure. But the Shaykh knew that he deserved blame for what he had said to the youth. So he felt inclined to pacify him, and vouchsafed to submit to his claim and not to ask a fee for cupping him. The lad, however, would not hear but of going and fleeing from his presence, and the twain ceased not from argument and abuse, and tugging each other about, until the youth quaked from the strife and his sleeves got torn. Then he cried aloud over his exceedingly great loss, and the rending of his honour and his rags, while the Shaykh began to make excuses for his excesses, and to quiet the other's tears. But the youth would not listen to his apologies nor abate his weeping until the Shaykh said to him: "May thy uncle (meaning himself) be thy ransom, and that which grieves thee pass over. Art thou not tired of wailing? Wilt thou not learn forbearance? Hast thou not heard of him, who exercised forgiveness, taking after the speech of him who said:

"Quench by thy mercy the fire of anger that recklessly a churl has kindled in thee, and pardon his trespass,
For mercy is far the best of jewels that grace the wise, and sweetest fruit, culled by man, is ready forgiveness."

Then the youth said to him: "Forsooth, if thou wert to look at my sordid life, thou wouldst excuse my flowing tears. But the smooth-skinned make light of what the back-sore feels." Then it was as if he became

ashamed, and he left off weeping, regaining his composure, and he said to the Shaykh : "I have now conformed with thy wish, so patch up what thou hast rent." Said the Shaykh : "Get thee gone ! thou overtaxest the flow of the streamlets of my bounty : spy for another's lightning, than mine." Then he rose to go from row to row, and begged for the gift of the standers-by, inditing while he was wending his way between them :

"I swear by Mecca's holy house, whither flock in pilgrim's garb the pious from far and wide :
If I possessed but food for one day, my hand would never touch the lancet or cupping-cup.
Nor would my soul, that craves for fair fame with men, contentedly put up with this sign of trade,
Nor had this youth complained of harshness from me or felt the lacerating prick of my sting.
But, lack-a-day, foul fortune's fell fitfulness, left me to grope my way in pitch-darkest night
And poverty brought me to such piteous pass : the blazing pit of hell I would fain prefer !
Is there a man then whom compassion impels, and tender feelings prompt to prove kind to me ?"

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm : Thereupon I was the first to commiserate with his misfortune, and doled out to him two dirhems, saying [within myself], "They are of no account, even though he should be a liar." So he rejoiced at the first-fruit of his gathering, and augured well from them for the obtainment of what he needed ; and the dirhems ceased not to pour upon him, and to come to him from all sides, until he had become possessed of verdant plenty, and a well-filled saddle-bag. Then he cheered up at this, and congratulated himself on the event, saying to the youth : "This is a

spring-growth of thy sowing, and a milk-flow of which one half belongs to thee; come then to take thy share, and be not abashed." Thus they divided the money between them to the nicety with which the fruit of the dwarf palm splits in two, and rose in perfect agreement, and when the bond of conciliation was tied between them, and the Shaykh bethought himself of going, I said to him: "My blood is heated, and I had directed my steps to thee, so wouldst thou please to cup me and rid me of my ailment?" Then he turned his glance upon me and scanned me sharply, whereupon he came close up to me and indited:

"What think'st thou of my cunning and beguiling, and what occurred 'twixt me and my kid yonder?

That I come off as victor in the contest, and feed on fertile meadows after famine?

Tell me, my heart's core, tell me, pray, by Allah, hast ever thou set eyes upon one like me?

To open by my spell each fastened padlock? to captivate all minds by charm of witchcraft?

To blend the serious with the sportive humour? If Al Iskandarî has been before me,

The dew precedes the shower, but the shower excels the dew in fructifying bounty."

Said the narrator: Then his poetry roused my attention and made me perceive that he was our Shaykh, whom every finger points out. So I rebuked him for his lowering himself and stooping to self-abasement. But he took no notice of what he heard, and minded not my rebuke, saying: "Any shoe suits the bare-footed who walks on flints." Wherewith he stepped away from me contemptuously, and started off, he and his son, like two racehorses.

THE FORTY-EIGHTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "THE ḤARÂMÎYEH."

This Assembly, the first composed by Ḥarîri, is based on a fact, which has been reported to us by two independent witnesses. Al Fajandîhi relates, that Ibn Qiṭri, who was Kadi of Al Mazâr, a town in the neighbourhood of Basra, had repented of his former indulgence in wine, but relapsed into his sinful habit. One day he happened to be present in the mosque of the Benû Harâm in Basra, that is, of the quarter in which this Arab tribe had settled, when 'Omar founded the City, and here he was mysteriously moved to sincere penitence, which prompted him to ask whether any member of the congregation could point out to him an atonement for his transgression. Then a stranger stepped forward, who claimed to be a fugitive citizen of Serûj, which had then fallen into the hands of the Greeks (here mistaken for the Franks of the first Crusade), and that his daughter had been made a captive by the enemy, from whom, in his destitute condition, he was unable to ransom her. He wound up by saying to Ibn Qiṭri: "Thy sin will be atoned for if thou bestow alms upon me, sufficient to set her free," and the Kadi, believing his statement to be true, presented him with twenty gold denars, part of which was forthwith spent by the rogue on wine in a tavern at a safe distance from the mosque. According to Abû 'l Ḳâsim 'Abdallah, Ḥarîri's son, the latter, who lived in this quarter and is therefore surnamed Al-Ḥarâmi, assisted at the scene and had previously to it, like the rest of the company, been much impressed by an eloquent address of the ragged stranger, who on their inquiry after his name, had called himself Abû Zayd the Serûji. Ḥarîri went home and wrote the present Assembly, in which Abû Zayd is supposed to dictate his tale to Al Ḥârith, a form of narration subsequently abandoned by Ḥarîri, apparently for obvious reasons of clearness and stylistic conveniency.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related in the words of Abû Zayd: I ceased not since I bestrode my stout camel and departed from my spouse and my sprigs, to crave for the sight of Basra with the craving of the oppressed for help, since the possessors of knowledge and the lords of tradition agreed upon the eminence of

her schools and scholars; and the glories of her tombs and martyrs, and I begged of Allah to make me tread her soil, so that I might feast my eyes on her, and that he would let me alight in her, so as to wander about her wards and outskirts. Now when good luck had landed me there and my glances pastured in her freely, I saw in her all that fills the eye with delight and makes every stranger forgetful of his native place. So I set out one morning when the taint of darkness was vanishing, and Abû Munzir was calling out his admonitions to the sleepers, to stroll about in her precincts, and to satisfy the hankering I had to penetrate into the midst of her. Then my traversing her roads and my sauntering in her streets brought me into a quarter noted as sacred and named after the Benû Harâm; that was possessed of Mosques much visited and of tanks much frequented, of buildings of solid structure and mansions of pleasing aspect, of choice excellencies and numerous rarities.

Thy heart's desire of holy things and worldly
thou findest there, and neighbours of motley tendence,
One all wrapped up in scripture's wondrous verses,
the other thrilled by tunes of the trembling lute-string,
One skilled in solving deeply hidden meanings,
the other bent on loosing the bonds of captives.
How many there, who wear their eyes by reading
or wear their trays by feeding the needy stranger,
How many places of resort for learning,
and seats of bounty, lavishing sweets of harvest,
And mansions where not cease from morn to evening
the warblings of the peerless maiden minstrels.
So join, if thus inclined, this one in prayer,
or, if thou wilt, that one in broaching wine-casks,
For there without restraint thou mayst indulge in
the wise man's converse or the toper's tankard.

Said he: Now while I was scouting her thoroughfares and gazing at her fairness, I perceived towards sundown and the approach of eventide, a mosque, renowned for its beauties, and deriving splendour from its frequenters, where the people assembled in it had started the discussion of interchangeable letters and were running a race in the course of debate. So I turned towards them, in order to ask for rain from their cloud, not to borrow light from their grammar-lore. Then it was not but as the snatching of a fire-brand of one in haste, that the voices rose for the prayer-call, followed by the sallying forth of the Imâm, when the blades of speech were sheathed, and the loops loosed for standing up, so that devotions diverted us from asking for food, and worship from seeking bounty. But when the due of obligatory prayer was discharged, and the people nigh dispersing, there emerged from the congregation an elderly man of sweet eloquence, who possessed of graceful gifts an easy flow of speech, and the fecundity of a Hasan. Said he: "O my neighbours, whom I have chosen before the branches of my own tree, and whose precincts I have made the house of my refuge, whom I have taken for my kith and kin, and made my stay for the time of my presence and absence, know ye that the vestment of truth is brighter than costly raiments, and that ignominy in this world is lighter to bear than ignominy in the world to come, that religion is the imparting of sincere advice, and guidance the indication of sound faith, that the consulted has a claim to confidence, and that the seeker of right direction is entitled to be counselled, that he proves to be thy brother, who reproves thee, not he who finds for thee

excuses, and that thy friend in truth is he who tells thee truth, not he who says 'true' to all thou sayest!" Quoth those present: "O thou, our loving friend and cherished intimate, what is the secret of thy riddling speech, and what the explanation of thy concise address, and what desirest thou to be accomplished by us? For by Him, who has bestowed upon us thy affection, and made us the sincerest of thy friends, we shall not withhold from thee our advice, nor be sparing in our gift." Then he replied: "May ye be rewarded with good and preserved from harm, for ye are of those of whom a companion need not complain, and from whom dissimulation proceedeth not, in whom no expectation is disappointed, and from whom no secret should be concealed. So I will disclose to you what rankles in my breast and consult you on the matter that exhausts my patience. Know ye then, that while my fire-shaft yielded no spark and luck kept aloof from me, I was sincere in my purpose of covenant with Allah, and pledged my vow to Him, that I would never buy wine nor associate with boon-companions, nor quaff strong drink, nor don the garb of inebriety. But my misleading lust and my abasing and deluding sensuality prompted me to keep company with mighty topers, and to pass round the cups, to put away gravity and suckle myself with grape-wine, to bestride the back of the ruddy one, and be forgetful of repentance, as we are forgetful of the dead. Nor was I contented with this once, of which I have told you, in my obedience to Abû Murrah, but I was addicted to the old vintage even on the fifth day and allowed myself to be thrown prostrate by the bright wine during the sacred night. Therefore behold me

contrite for my abandoning the way of return to God, and exceedingly penitent for my indulgence in constant drink, greatly in fear from the breach of my covenant and openly confessing my excess in quaffing the fermenting must.

Is there then an atonement, ye know of, O friends of mine,
To bring far from my sin me, and near to my Lord again ?"

Now when he had loosened the knot of his utterance and satisfied his need of complaint anent his distress, my soul whispered to me, This, O Abû Zayd, is an opportunity for catching game, so tuck up the sleeves from thy arm and sinew. Whereupon I rose from my roosting-place, as rises the alert, and sallied forth from my position in the row of worshippers with the swiftness of an arrow, saying:

Thou, distinguished by noble rank, great in glory and princeliness,
who desirest a guiding hand to the path of eternal bliss,
I am able to cure the ill, that deprives thee of peaceful sleep:
listen then to a wondrous case, fraught for me with perplexity.
Once I had in Serûj my home, seat of faith and of righteousness,
where obedience was paid to me for my wealth and my lordly state.
Throngs of guests were resorting to my abode and received my boon,
for with presents I purchased praise, kept my honour by bounty bright,
Caring naught that my treasures went in profuse liberality,
and I kindled the fire aloft, which the miser is fain to quench,
That the strayer might find with me hoped-for shelter and resting-place;
none athirst watched my lightning's flash and remained still a prey to thirst,
None, nor came one to borrow fire from my shaft, and it failed to flame;
while the times were in league with me spread I round me prosperity,

Till the Lord wrought a change in what through His favour had been my wont,
for He settled the Greeks in our country after a feud that rose,
And they seized on the households of all believers in one true God and deprived me of all my goods either hidden or free to view.
Thus became I an outcast in distant lands and a fugitive,
who beseecheth men's bounty while ere it had been besought of me,
And such misery is my lot, that it makes me to wish for death:
for the height of calamity, which has robbed me of all my cheer,
Is my daughter's captivity, who was captured for ransom's sake.
cast a glance then upon my woe, and to help me stretch out thy hand,
Ay, protect me from fortune fell, that has wronged me and been my foe,
aiding me to redeem my child from the hostile's degrading bond.
By such acts are the sins wiped out of a servant who has rebelled,
is repentance accepted from one renouncing all worldliness,
And they are an atonement for him who, guided, has swerved astray.
though I spoke this in strains of verse yet my speech leads aright and true;
So accept the advice I give, and my guidance with thankful heart,
and bestow what may be at hand, winning praise from my gratitude.

Now when I had finished my long and rapid improvisation, and he whose help I implored, was satisfied of the truth of my words, his eagerness instigated him to display generosity in my assistance and zeal incited him to take trouble in relieving my distress. So he dealt out to me a ready dole forthwith and was profuse in ample promise, so that I returned to my nest gleeful at the success of my stratagem, for by fashioning my artifice I had obtained the sipping of my sop, and the weaving of my poem had gotten me the enjoyment of my pudding-pie. Quoth Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, "Then I said to him: 'Praise to Him who has created

thee, how mighty is thy trickery and how vile are thy inventions.' But he burst out laughing exceedingly and indited without hesitation :

'Live by deceit, for we live in times whose sons resemble the forest lions.

Set aflow the rills of wile so that the mill of life may briskly turn round.

And hunt for eagles, if the chase should fail content thyself with a tuft of feathers ;

Try to cull the fruit, if the fruit escape thee, be satisfied with the leaves remaining ;

And ease thy heart from distracting thoughts at the frowns of fickle and adverse fortune,

For the ceaseless change of vicissitudes proclaims the doom of our life's unstableness.' "

THE FORTY-NINTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF SÂSÂN."

According to most commentators, Sâsân, after whom this Assembly is named, was the eldest son of the king of part of Western Persia, who was disinherited by his father in favour of a daughter and her progeny, and fled in high dudgeon from his father's court, to lead the life of a nomad shepherd amongst the Kurds. Thus he became the *beau-idéal* of beggars and vagrants, and the hero of popular tales, like the "king of the gipsies." Others state that, under "the race of Sâsân," the Persian kings of the last Dynasty are meant, many of whose descendants were, after the conquest of the country by the Arabs, reduced to the utmost poverty and excited popular commiseration by their tragic downfall. Alluding to this prince of beggars or beggared princes, Abû Zayd urges his son to practise mendicancy as a fine art, which he himself had found preferable to all other recognised means to gain an enjoyable livelihood.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related : The report reached me, that Abû Zayd, when he neared the (number of years indicated by the) clenched fist (ninety-three), and the fetter of old age robbed him of the power of rising, sent for his son, after having col-

lected his thoughts, and said to him: "O my son, behold the time for departing from the threshold and for having my eyes anointed with the kohl-pencil of demise has drawn nigh, and thou, praise be to Allah, art my heir apparent, and the leader of the flock of Sâsân after me, and for one like thee it needs no tapping with the staff, nor awakening him by the throw of pebbles, but he is called upon to exhort men's minds, and made to be a furbisher of their thoughts. So I bequeath thee that which Seth bequeathed not to Nabaṭ, nor Jacob to the tribes. Preserve then my bequest and eschew disobedience to me; pattern thyself after my likeness, and ponder well my saws, for if thou be guided by my counsel and take light from my morning, thy alighting-place will be rich in herbs and thy smoke (*i.e.*, the smoke of thy fires of hospitality) will rise aloft, whereas, if thou be forgetful of my surah, and cast from thee my advice, the ashes of thy trivet will be few, and thy people and kin will make light of thee. O my son, I have tested the true states of things and experienced the vicissitudes of fortune, and have seen a man held worth his wealth, not his pedigree, and inquiry is made after his gain, not after his deserts. Now I have heard that the means of livelihood are ministry and commerce, and husbandry and handicraft. So I have plied these four to see which of them is the most fitting and profitable. But I have not proved living by them praiseworthy, nor found ease of life plentiful in them, for the opportunities of rulerships and the perquisites of administrations are like the entanglements of dreams and like the shadows vanishing with the darkness, and a sufficient anguish for thee is

the bitterness of being weaned therefrom. And as for the goods of trade, they are subject to risks, and a butt to depredatory inroads, and how like they are to swift-winged birds. And as for the undertaking of farms and applying one's self to tilling the ground, it is a source of demeanment and a drag impeding advancement, and rarely is its pursuer exempt from despisal or blest with tranquillity of mind. And lastly as for the crafts of artisans, they yield not more than the merest pittance, and sell not briskly at all times, and most of them are dependent on the prime of life. And I see naught easy to win, sweet to taste, and in its acquirement pure of nature, but the craft of which Sâsân has planted the roots and diversified the branches, whose light he has made to shine in the East and West, and whose beacon he has kindled to the sons of dust. So I engaged in its battles, sporting its badge, and chose its mark as my ornament, since it is the merchandise that never slacks, and the spring that never sinks, and the lamp to which all resort and by which the blind and the one-eyed obtain light. And those who exercise it are the most powerful of tribes, and the luckiest of folks, no touch of oppression overtakes them, no drawing of the sword harasses them, they fear not the sting of biting vermin, nor submit they to anyone either near or far, they are not in awe of him who lightens and thunders, nor care they for him who (in his fretful anger) rises and sits down again. Their assemblies are pleasant, their hearts at ease, their food is sped before them, and their times pass brightly. Wheresoever they alight, they pick up, and where they slip in, they strip off, they make no country their home and fear no king, and they differ

not from the birds that are hungry in the morning and full at eventide." Then his son said to him: "O my father, thou hast spoken true in what thou hast said, but thou hast stitched together, not ripped open. So explain to me how I may gather in a harvest, and from which end the shoulder is to be eaten." Said he: "O my son, bestirring one's self is the door to it, and alacrity its array, and sharpness of wit its lamp, and pertness its weapon; be thou more on the move than the Qutrub, and travel swifter than the locust, be brisker than the gazelle by moonlight, and more aggressive than the tiger-wolf, rub the fire-shaft of thy fortune by thy effort, and knock at the door of thy sustenance by thy activity, cross every mountain-pass and dive into every deep, forage over every pasture-ground and sink thy bucket into every fountain, weary not of begging, and be not loath of exertion, for it was written on the staff of our elder Sâsân: 'He gets, who begs, he who roves, makes sure of his loaves.' But beware of sloth, for it is a presage of calamities and the garb of the indigent, the key of poverty and the germ of affliction, the token of weakness and folly, and the habit of the helpless, the dependent. He gathers no honey who has chosen laziness, nor fills he his palm who deems ease a smooth bed. So step boldly forward, though it be against the lion, for daringness of the soul gives speech to the tongue and freedom of motion to the rein, and by it eminence is reached and affluence obtained, even as cowardice is the twin of sluggishness, and the cause of failure, and a hindrance to action, and a disappointment to hope. Therefore it is said in the proverb: 'One who dares, fares well, he who fears, will

fail.' Sally then forth, my son, with the earliness of the raven, and the boldness of the lion, and the prudence of the chameleon, and the cunning of the wolf, and the greed of the pig, and the nimbleness of the gazelle, and the craftiness of the fox, and the patience of the camel, and the blandishments of the cat, and the diversity of colours of the humming-bird. Beguile by the gilding of thy tongue and deceive by the sorcery of thy eloquence; inquire after the state of a market before bringing thy goods to it, and coax the teat before milking; ask the travellers before visiting a pasture-ground, and make it smooth for thy side, before thou liest down; sharpen thy sight for taking omen from the flight of birds, and train thy perception for drawing inferences; for he who is right in reading characters will have the laugh for a long time, while the prey of him, who errs in his guess, will be tardy. Make, my son, thy burden light, and little thy dalliance, be averse to a repeated draught and content with a drizzle instead of a downpour, extol the value of the paltry and be thankful for a trifle, be not disheartened at a refusal, nor deem it far from possible that the rock should ooze, and despair not of the mercy of Allah, for none despaireth of Allah's mercy but the faithless. And if thou have to choose between a mite ready at hand, and a pearl promised thee, incline to the ready, and prefer the day that is to the morrow that is to be; for delay leads to losses, and intentions are subject to change, and promises are prone to be postponed, and between them and their fulfilment lie mountains, ay, what mountains! Display then the patience of men of purpose, and the forbearance of the considerate, shun

the harshness of one who exceeds bounds, and assume the habits of a cheerful disposition, keep tight the strings of thy purse, and blend lavishness with parsimony, hold not thy hand tied to thy neck, nor open it to its full extent. And when a country disagrees with thee, or a trouble has befallen thee therein, cut off thy hope from it and speed away from it thy camel, for the best of countries is that which betters thy state, and deem not departure burdensome nor hate removal, for the chiefs of our sect, and the elders of our tribe have agreed thereon, that motion is a blessing and the change of places like a promissory note, whereas they blame him who holds that peregrination is a bore and migration an infliction, and they say that it is an excuse of those who are contented with a paltry pittance and gratified with poor fruit and bad measure. But if thou have resolved on journeying abroad, and got ready for it thy staff and thy wallet, make choice of a helpful companion, ere thou settest out, for the neighbour before the house, and the fellow-traveller before wayfaring.

There is, my son, a bequest for thee, such as none afore was bequeathed yet,
One bright and fraught with the essence of choice rules and maxims that guide aright.
I selected them as a counseller sincere and earnest in his advice,
So act according to what I teach, as a wise and well-conducted wight,
That admiringly all people say: 'This in truth is yonder lion's whelp.'"

Said he: "O my son, I have given thee my last behest and made it right complete. Now, if thou follow it, well done! but if thou trespass against it, out upon thee! And may Allah be my substitute with thee, and

I trust thou wilt not belie what I think of thee." Then his son said to him: "O my father, may thy throne be never brought low, nor thy bier uplifted. Thou hast indeed spoken true, and taught aright, and bestowed on me that which never yet father has bestowed on son, and if I be spared after thee, but may I never taste thy loss, I will forsooth mould my manners after thy manners, the excellent, and follow thy traces, the illustrious, so that it may be said how like is this night to yesterday, and the morning cloud to the cloud of even." Thereupon Abû Zayd rejoiced at his answer and smiled, and said: "He who resembles his father, wrongs not" (*i.e.*, his mother's fair fame).

Said Al Ḥarith, son of Hammâm: It has come to my knowledge that when the sons of Sâsân heard these beautiful mandates, they prized them above the mandates of Lokman, and learnt them by heart, as the mother of the Koran is learnt, so that they reckon them to this time the best that they can teach their children, and more profitable to them than a gift of gold.

THE FIFTIETH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF BASRA."

This last and crowning piece of Ḥarîri's work is remarkable in two directions, which both bring it in close relation to the forty-eighth. In the latter the author extolled in eloquent strains the quarter of Basra, which was inhabited by him; here he out-soars the highest flights of his oratory in a magnificent encomium of his native town itself. But the present Assembly is still more admirable as a counter-part of that of the Benû Harâm with regard to the hero of the romance, who, having given there an account of an incident, which ominously inaugurated his questionable career, is now represented as redeeming, under the touch of divine grace, his life of

venturesome expedients, frequently bordering on crime, by sincere repentance and transports of pure and unremitting devotion.

Al Hârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was one day wrapped up in sadness, whose brunt was fierce, and whose impress was visible in me, and as I had heard that resorting to the assemblies of invocation removes all veils from man's thought, I saw for the putting out of the live coal within me, naught but making for the cathedral mosque of Basra, whose chairs were at that time well filled, whose fountains were frequented, so that the flowers of speech might be culled in its meads, and the whir of pens was to be heard in its precincts. So I sped thither without delay and without swerving to the right or left, and when I had set foot on its gravel and got sight of its uttermost end, I espied a man in out-worn tatters upon an elevated stone, round whom throngs were crowded of uncounted number, and not engaged in child's work. Therefore I hasted in his direction and sought access to him, hoping to find with him the cure of my disease, and I ceased not shifting places, heedless of knocks and blows, until I was seated opposite to him, where I was safe of mistaking him, when, lo, it was our Shaykh the Serûji, no doubt in him, nor any disguise to conceal him. Then at his sight my grief subsided, and the hosts of my cares were scattered. But when he perceived me and glanced at the place where I was sitting, he said: "O ye people of Basra! may Allah keep and guard you, and strengthen your piety; how far spread is the fragrance of your fame, and how surpassing are the virtues that distinguish you; your country is the most eminent of countries in purity, the richest of them in

natural gifts, the widest in expanse, and the most fertile in pasture-grounds ; she boasts over them the correctest kiblah, the broadest stream, the greatest number of rivers and date-palms, the most exquisite beauty in detail and aggregate, being the gateway to the sacred land and fronting the door (of the Ka'beh) and the station (of Abraham), one of the two wings of the world, and a city founded on the fear of Allah, that never was defiled by flames of the fire, whose people never circumambulated idols, and prostrated themselves on her ground to none but the Merciful ; possessed of shrines much visited and of mosques thronged with worshippers, of schools far celebrated, and of tombs resorted to by pilgrims, of monuments revered and enclosed precincts. In it meet the ships and the saddle-beasts, the fish and the lizards, the camel-driver and the sailor, the hunter and the tiller, the harpooner and the lancer, the herd and the swimmer, and to it belongs the spectacle of the tide that rises and the tide that ebbs. But as for you, ye are of those whose excellencies not two contest, no enemy gainsays. Your community are the most obedient lieges to their Lord, and the most grateful for benefits bestowed on them. Your ascetic is the most devout of mankind, and the brightest light on the road of truth ; your scholar the most learned of all ages, and the supreme authority for all times, and from amongst you came forth he who created and laid down the lore of grammar, and he who devised the measures of poetry, and there is no boast of man, but to you belongs the foremost hand in it, and the winning arrow ; there is no glory, but ye are the most worthy of it, and the most deserving. Withal ye

have Muezzins far more than the people of any town, and in worship ye observe the nicest rules, and from you pattern is taken in performing the ceremonies of 'Arafât, and became known the morning bounty in the sacred month, for when the slumbers are still and the sleeper is soundly asleep, there is heard amongst you a recitation that rouses the somnolent, and rejoices the wakeful, and the smile of morning dawns not, nor breaks forth its light in season hot or cold, but the prayer-call summons you with a murmur, like the murmur of the wind on the sea-waves. Wherefore Tradition has disclosed concerning you, and the Prophet, be peace upon him, has declared aforehand that your murmur in the mornings would be like the murmur of the bees in the deserts ; honour then to you for the prediction of the chosen one, and hail to your city, though it be effaced and nought remain of it but an outline." Then he checked his tongue and put an end to his speech, so that their eyes glanced at him, and he was suspected of falling short, nay, taunted with inability to proceed, but he sighed the sigh of him who is dragged to execution, or whom a lion's claws have clutched, when he said: "As for you, O people of Basra, there is none among you but he is worthy of renown alike for learning and liberality ; but as for me, he who knows me—well, I am such, and the worst of acquaintances is he who injures thee ; but to one who knows me not, I will now disclose truly my character. It is I, who have fared in Nejd and Tihâmeh, in Yemen and Syria, in the desert and the sea, in deepest night and early morning. In Serûj I was reared, and in the saddle I got my training. Forsooth, I have entered

straits, and opened roads that were closed, and witnessed frays, and soothed tempers, and curbed the restive and pressed nostrils in the dust, and melted the frozen, and softened rocks. Ask of me the East and the West, the hoofs (of camels) and (their) humps, assemblies and hosts, tribes and squadrons, and gather clear tidings of me from the reporters of traditions and the story-tellers at night-talks, from the drivers of caravans, and the sharp-sighted diviners, that ye may know how many mountain-passes I have threaded and veils I have rent, how many perils I have braved and fights I have fought, how often I have beguiled the minds of men, and devised novelties and snatched opportunities, and made lions my prey, how many a high-flown I have left prone, how many a hidden one I have brought out by my spells, how many a flint I have ground until it split, and made spring its sweet water by my wiles. But there has passed what has passed, while the bough was fresh and the temple raven-haired, and the raiment of youth yet new; whereas now the skin has withered, the straight grown crooked, the dark night waxed light, and naught remains but repentance, if it avail, and to patch up the rent that has widened. Now, I had been apprised by reports well supported, and by traditions authenticated, that on every day a glance from Allah, be He exalted, falls upon you, and whereas all men's weapons are of iron, your weapons consist in prayers, and the profession of one God. So I repaired to you, jading my saddle-beasts, and travelling from station to station, until I stood in this place before you, though thereby no obligation be laid upon you, since I sped not hither but for my own need, and toiled not but for my

own tranquillity, and I crave not your gifts, but beg for your prayers, nor ask I for your wealth, but solicit your supplication. Pray then to Allah, may He be exalted, to accord me grace for repentance and readiness for my return to Him, for He is the Most High in dignity and answers prayers, and He it is who accepts penitence from His servants and forgives transgressions.

"Allah's forgiveness I crave for sins that, woe me! I have wantonly committed.

How oft I have plunged in seas of error, and morn and eve walked in paths of folly,

How oft I have followed passion's promptings, been arrogant, greedy and deceitful,

How oft I have spurned the curb in rushing headlong and unchecked to fell rebellion,

How oft I have reached the bounds of trespass, and never ceased from careering onwards.

Would that I had been afore forgotten, and never gathered what, alas, I gathered,

For better far death to him who sinneth, than to pursue such a course as I sped!

But, O my Lord, grant to me forgiveness: Thy Mercy is greater than my trespass."

Said the narrator: Forthwith the congregation commenced to aid him with their prayer, while he turned his face heavenward, until his eyelids brimmed with tears and his agitation became conspicuous, when he cried out: "Allah is greatest! the sign of acceptance has appeared and the veil of doubt is removed. May ye then, O folks of dear Basra, be rewarded with the reward of Him who guides out of perplexity." Then there remained none among the people who rejoiced not in his joy, doling out to him what he had ready at hand. He accepted the bestowal of their bounty, and began to expatiate in thanks to them, whereupon he

descended from the stone and wended towards the river bank. But I followed in his wake, to where we found ourselves alone and were safe of being spied and intermeddled with. Then I said to him: "This time thou hast done marvels, but what is thy view as to repentance?" Said he: "I swear by Him who knows all hidden things and forgives transgressions, my case is indeed a miracle and the prayers of thy fellow-people have been answered." I replied: "Enlighten me more, so may Allah grant thee more of welfare!" Said he: "Truly, I had stood before them in the stead of a doubter, a deceiver, and, lo, I have turned from them with the heart of the contrite, the devout. Weal then to him to whom they incline their hearts, and woe to him on whom they call down their imprecations." Thereupon he bade me farewell, and went away, leaving me in unrest, so that I ceased not tormenting my thoughts on his account, and looking out for means of testing the truth of what he had stated. But every time I sniffed for tidings of him from wayfarers and roamers in foreign lands, I was like one who talks to dumb brutes, or hails a mute rock, until after a length of time and reaching the pitch of anguish, I met with some travellers returning from a journey, to whom I said: "Is there any rare news?" Quoth they: "Indeed, we have news rarer than the 'Anḳâ and more marvellous than the sight of Zarḳâ." So I asked them for explanation of what they had said, and that they would mete to me what had been meted to them. Then they told me that they had made a halt at Serûj, after the wild asses had left it, and had seen there its renowned Abû Zayd, who had donned the wool cloth,

and was leading the rows of the praying and had become a famous devotee. Said I to them: "Mean ye him of the Assemblies?" Quoth they: "Yea, him now of all miraculous endowments." Forthwith longing urged me towards him, for I saw in him an opportunity not to be lost. So I set out in all readiness and made for him full earnestly, until I alighted at his mosque and the place of his worship, when, lo, he had discarded the society of his associates, and stood upright in his prayer-niche, wearing a cloak stitched together with a tooth-pick, and a patched wrapper. So I was struck with awe of him, like one who has broken in upon lions, and found him amongst those whose token is the trace of prostration in their faces, and when he had told his rosary, he greeted me with his forefinger without uttering a word of talk, nor asking for tidings old or new. Then he proceeded with his recitation from the Koran, and left me wondering at his devotion, and envying those whom Allah leads aright amongst his servants, and he desisted not from adoration and humiliation, from prostrating himself and bowing down, from self-abasement and contrition, until he had completed the performance of the five prayers, and to-day had become yesterday, when he betook himself with me to his abode, and gave me a share in his loaf and olive-oil. Thereupon he rose to enter his Oratory, and remained alone in converse with his Lord, until, when the morn shone forth, and the wakeful worshipper was entitled to his reward, he followed up his vigil with prayers of praise. Then only he reclined in the posture of the seeker of repose, and began to chaunt with an impressive voice:

"Good-bye, my soul, to memories
of vernal camps, and tryste therein,
And fond farewell to trav'ller fair,
yea, bid good-bye to them for aye.
Bewail the time that passed away,
when thou hast blackened pages bright,
And never ceased to steep thyself
in deeds of shame and heinousness.
How oft the night was spent by thee
in sins that none afore has dared,
From lust, indulged without restraint
on wanton couch, in chamber still.
How often spedst thou on thy steps
to unheard-of depravity,
And brokest repentance, slowly vowed,
in swift forgetting sport and play;
How often madest thou bold, O slave,
against the Lord of heavens high,
Not heeding Him and proving false,
ay, false to thy pretended faith;
How often flungst thou, like a shoe
outworn, aside His stern command,
Ungrateful for His benefits
and reckless of His tardy wrath;
How often, running pleasure's course,
and glibly speaking lies prepense,
Wast thou neglecting carelessly
the duties of His covenant.
So don the garb of penitence,
and shower tears of blood, before
Thy foot commits a fatal slip,
before thy fall has come to pass;
Humbly confess thy sins and fly
for refuge where the guilty flies;
Resist thy lewd propensities
and turn from them with purpose firm.
How long in thoughtlessness and sloth
wilt thou let drift life's better part,
To what brings loss as only gain,
and never check'st thy mad career.
Perceivest thou not the mingled hue
that streaks with hoary lines thy head,

Yet he whose ringlets blend with grey
  is warned of his approaching death.
Woe thee, my soul, redemption seek,
  obey, be true, be well advised,
Take warning from those gone before,
  in generations passed away,
And fear the stealing on of fate,
  be wary, lest thou be deceived.
Walk in the path of rectitude,
  for swift, remember, comes thy doom:
To-morrow will thy dwelling be
  the bottom of a lonely grave;
Alas, that house of sore dismay,
  that station, waste, disconsolate,
That goal of pilgrims of long syne,
  of countless pilgrims yet to come;
A house whose inmate will be seen
  encompassed, after ample space,
Within the bond of cubits three,
  to hold him in their narrow grip.
Who there alights, it matters not
  if he a wit be, or a fool,
If poor, or if possessed of all
  the riches of a Tobba' king.
And after it the roll-call comes,
  that musters timid wight, and bold,
And teacher and disciple, and
  the ruler and the ruled alike.
Then O the bliss of him that fears
  his Lord, and earns the thrall's reward,
Safe from the dread account and from
  the terrors of that awful day.
But O the loss of those who have
  sinned and transgressed beyond all bounds,
And kindled discord's blazing fire,
  for sake of worldly goods and joys.
O Thou, in whom my trust is placed,
  how grows my fear with every day,
For all the slips and falls that fill
  my ill-spent life with guilt and crime.
But, Lord, forgive Thy erring slave,
  yield mercy to his welling tears,

For the most Merciful art Thou,
and Best to whom are prayers raised."

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Thus he ceased not repeating these words in a low voice and mingling them with sobs and sighs, until I wept by reason of the weeping of his eyne, as I had wept heretofore anent him. Then he sallied forth to his mosque, cleansed by his night-wake, and I went in his track, and prayed with those who prayed behind him, and when the people present dispersed and separated hither and thither, he took to muttering his lessons and casting his day in the mould of his yesterday, while he wailed with the wailing of a bereft mother, and wept as not Jacob wept, so that I saw clearly that he had joined the seven saints, and that his heart was imbued with the love of seclusion. So I formed within me the resolution to depart and to leave him all by himself in this state. Then it was as if he had read my purpose or had revealed to him that which I kept concealed, for he sighed like one grief-stricken, after which he quoted (from the Koran): "If thou make a resolution, put thy trust in Allah." Thereupon I testified to the truthfulness of my informants, and knew for certain that in our dispensation inspired ones are found. So I went nigh to him, to put my hand in his, and said: "Give me thy bequest, O servant sincere of counsel," when he said: "Keep death before thy eye, and this is the parting between me and thee." With this he bade me farewell, while the tears streamed from the corners of my eyes, and my sighs rose from within my entrails, this being the last of our meetings.

NOTES TO THE ASSEMBLIES OF ḤARÎRI.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH ASSEMBLY.

Ḥarîri himself accompanies this Assembly with a short commentary on the idioms and Arabic proverbs occurring in it, and his explanations included amongst the following notes are marked with (H.).

In the prime of my life.—Arabic *fî rayyiqi zamânî*, also *râ'iq*, which means, in the beginning or early part of it. Another spelling of the word is *raiq*, without tashdid.—(H.)

The people of the hair-tents.—*Wabar* means originally "camel-hair," or as the Arabic lexicographers put it, "that which in the camel corresponds to the wool of the sheep, and is opposed to *madar*, a clod of clay or mud. Hence *ahlu 'l wabar* designates the dwellers in tents made of a tissue of camel-hair pitched in the desert, and *ahlu 'l-madar*, the dwellers within mud-walls, the inhabitants of villages and towns." By a still bolder metaphor, *wabar* and *madar* are used for those dwelling-places themselves, as in the phrase: "the like of this I have not seen in desert or town."

So that I might take after the bent of their forbidding (lofty) souls, i.e., that I might follow their example. The verbal noun "taking" (here translated by bent) is in Arabic *aḫẕ* or *iḫẕ*.—(H.).

A string of the groaning.—*Al-hajmah* (exclusively applied to camels) is a drove of about a hundred (H.). According to other commentators it is from forty to a hundred, or between ninety and a hundred, while a number beyond this is called *hunaï'dah*.

A flock of the bleating.—*Aṣ-ṣallah* is a herd of sheep (H.). As to "the groaning" and "the bleating," Ḥarîri quotes the saying: Mâ la-hu râghiyatun wa ta ẓāghiyatun, for "he has neither camel nor sheep."

Stead-holders of kings, i.e., they took the places of kings in their absence (H.). *Ridf*, pl. ardâf, is one who rides behind another on

the same beast, hence, metaphorically, one next in rank, a successor, or substitute, one who sits at the right hand of the king, a wazîr or minister, and *ridâfah* in pre-Mohammedan times corresponds to the *wizârah*, or office of wazîr in Islâm. The phrase means that each of them was worthy of and fit for such dignity.

"*Sons of saws*," men who owed their fame to their choice sayings, eloquent speakers, to use the paraphrase of Ḥarîri, who adds: "It is said of a great orator, he is a son of speeches."

No arrow struck my (*smooth*) *rock*, a proverbial expression for "no slander was suffered to injure my fair fame."

Or throw the halter over her hump, *i.e.*, allow her to wander and graze where she pleased.

So I sprang upon a swift-paced steed.—Tadassur is synonymous with *wuṣûb*, to jump or leap upon the back of the horse, and miḥẓâr or maḥẓîr, fleet of course, is taken from *ḥaẓr*, running with a high step.—(H.)

Exploring every copse and treeless spot.—*Iqtirâ* = *tatabbu'*, following up, travelling from one place to another; *shajrâ'*, a place grown over with trees, *mardâ'*, one deprived of vegetation. Hence, *amrad*, hairless in the face, beardless.—(H.)

When the crier calls to prayer and salvation, in Arabic *ḥai'ala*, a verb formed from the initial words of the Muezzin's call, *ḥayya 'alá 'l-ṣalâti*, *ḥayya 'ala 'l-falâḥ*. The infinitive is *ḥai'alah*, and similar formations are *hailalah*, saying *lâ iláha illâ 'lláhu*, there is no God but *the* God; *ḥamdalah*, saying *al-ḥamdu li 'lláhi*, praise is due to God; *ḥauqalah*, saying *lâ ḥaula wa la quwwata illâ bi 'lláhi*, there is no power and no strength save in God; see *basmalah*, saying *bi'smi 'lláhi*, in the name of God; *ḥasbalah*, saying *ḥasbunâ 'lláhu*, God is our sufficiency; *sabḥalah*, saying *subḥâna 'lláhi*, adoration be God's; *ja'lafah* saying *ju iltu fidâka*, may I be made thy ransom.

And its going to the watering-place found no return, *i.e.*, did not obtain its object, as animals return from the water only after having quenched their thirst.

Until the heat waxed blinding, lit., until there came the time of the little blind one's stroke or knock, a most idiomatical expression which sorely taxes the ingenuity of the interpreters. Grammatically *'umaiy* is the diminutive of *a'má*, blind, and the Ḳâmûs says that it means by itself the noonday heat, in which case the effect would

stand for the cause, the blind for the blinding. Other explanations are (1) that 'Umay is the name of a famous depredator, who used to strike by his inroads upon people at mid-day, when they were too languid to offer much resistance. (2) That the word is applied to the young of the gazelle, which by the excess of the heat becomes frantic, and butts at or knocks against anything near it. In the Arabic Dictionary Muḥiṭ, I find the statement that in poetry the form *ṣakkatu 'umyin* (pl. of *a'mâ*) is used, the stroke or knock of the blind, either with the same reference to the gazelle, or to people blinded by the heat and groping their way by knocking their sticks on the ground. I conclude this note, Arabic fashion, with "God knows best."

Would have made Ghailân oblivious of Maiyah.—Ghailân was a renowned poet of the Bedouin Arabs, whose nickname *ẕû 'l-rummah*, "the one with the rope," was given to him by Maiya or Maiyah, daughter of Kays, when he first saw her, carrying a rope on his shoulder, and asked her for a draught of water to drink, whereupon she said, "O thou with the rope," which simple words, falling from lovely lips, forthwith enslaved him for life.

Longer than the shadow of a lance.—A long day is compared with the shadow of a lance, which by the Arabs is considered as the longest thrown by the setting sun, probably on account of its accompanying slenderness, as a short day is likened to the claw (lit., thumb) of the Ḳata bird. A poet, quoted in Ḥarîri's commentary, says: "Many a day, like the shadow of the lance, has been shortened for us by the blood of the wine-bag and striking the strings of lutes."

Hotter than the tears of the bereft mother.—It is said that the tear of grief is hot, and the tear of joy is cool, whence the prayer: "May Allah cool his eye"; and the imprecation: "May Allah heat his eye," for: May He make him shed tears of joy or of sorrow respectively. —(H.)

Sha'ûb would grip me.—Sha'ûb, a diptote, not taking the article, is a name of death, meaning the "Separator."

My boon-companion a booklet.—The Arabic *juzâzah*, a scrap, is used both for scrolls, in which beggars state their case, to enlist the sympathy of the charitable, and leaves of paper containing information. Adopting the latter meaning, I translate it by booklet, in

accordance with the saying of an Arabic poet, that a book is the best companion for a man to while away the time, as the saddle of a fleet horse is the best resort for him to make him independent of space.

For some end Ḳoṣayr mutilated his nose.—Ḳoṣayr bin Sa'd was a freedman of the King of Irak Jathîmet al Abrash, and after his master had been treacherously murdered by Queen Zebbâ, resolved to revenge his death on her. This he accomplished by having the tip of his nose cut off by his master's nephew 'Amr, pretending that the latter had done so because he suspected him of complicity in the betrayal of Jathîmet, and thereby gaining her confidence, which soon procured him an opportunity of putting his purpose into execution. Abû Zayd means that Ḥârith must have a good reason for his lonely journey in the desert during the noonday heat.

In the two months when the camels ail from thirst, lit., the two *months* of the thirst-stricken camel, meaning the hottest summer months, as we would say the dog-days, when the skin of camels and sheep dries up in consequence of their excessive thirst.

A night such as Nâbighah sings of, alluding to the following line of this poet: "I passed a night as though one of the spotted snakes had assailed me, the poison of whose fangs is piercing."

Like Ash'ab, a servant of the Khalif 'Othmân, proverbial amongst the Arabs for his covetousness, which according to his own confession was surpassed only by that of his equally proverbial sheep. The latter had mounted on his roof, and on seeing a rainbow took it for a rope of the plant *qatt* (apparently a favourite dainty with sheep), jumped at it and broke its neck.

Donning the leopard's skin, a proverbial expression for insolent and bold, the leopard (*namir*) being considered as the boldest of animals and the least patient of injury. Hence the verb *tanammara* is derived, he became like a leopard.—(H.)

Of the two good things, allusion to Koran, ix. 52.

One woe is lighter to bear than two, meaning that it is easier for Ḥârith to put up with the loss of his horse than to lose both horse and camel together.

After hap and mishap.—Thus I translate, in order to maintain the alliteration of the original, the words *ba'da 'llataiyâ wa 'llatî*, which it is impossible to render literally. *Allataiyâ* is the diminutive of

allatî, fem. of the relative pronoun *allaẕî*. Their idiomatical import in this place is, according to Ḥarîri's own commentary, either to serve as synonyms of calamity (*dâhiyah*), or to signify misfortunes small and great.

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH ASSEMBLY.

In accordance with tradition, alluding to the saying of Mohammed that he who bathes before Friday prayers will have his sins remitted.

Seeking in the sap of my youth help against the glamours of the mirage, *i.e.*, finding in the freshness and vigour of youth a safeguard against the allurements of sensual pleasure, which are deceptive as the *sarâb*, or resemblance of water in the desert. With regard to this latter word, that which I translate with "sap" is in the original *mâ'*, water, applied to the face in the sense of brightness and beauty, to youth in the sense of sprightliness and energy.

When I was entitled to speak of my home, lit., I was master of the expression *'indî*, which in Arabic is equivalent to, I have or possess. It differs from the synonyms *ladaiya* or *ma'î*, "I have with me," by meaning both "I have with me" and "at home," which latter signification justifies the above rendering.

And offer the best of cattle, for "a fattened camel," in allusion to a tradition handed down by Ibn Omar, according to which Mohammed said: He who has taken on a Friday the bath of purification is as though he had offered a fattened camel (*badanah*).

People ceased not to enter in troops into the faith of Allah, allusion to Koran, cx. 2, "And thou seest men entering the religion of Allah by troops." The following expression, "singly and in pairs," also occurs in the sacred book, xxxiv. 45, where, however, instead of *azwâjan* (in pairs), the expression *maṯnâ*, "two by two," is used.

And the time had come when a person is equal to his shadow, indicating the time shortly after noon, when the prayer of *ẓuhr* is to be performed, in accordance with the tradition: "Say the prayer of *ẓuhr*, when thy shadow is like thyself."

In the wake of his acolytes (*khalfa 'uṣbati-hi*).—The word *uṣbah*, troop, is explained by Sherîshi "the company of the *muaẓẓins*."

When he gave blessing by waving his right hand, instead of uttering the words *salâmun ʿalaikum*, a practice observed by preachers, following the doctrine of Ash-Shâfiʿî, to which Ḥarîri himself adhered.

A guide to the right road for the black hued and the red, i.e., for the Arabs and the nations unable to speak Arabic, and therefore called ʿAjam, dumb, as the Persians, Greeks, Europeans in general. They are respectively named black and red, on account of their complexion, or the colour of their hair.

Of the angel and the frightfulness of his questioning, allusion to the angels Munkar and Nakîr, said to visit the dead in their graves and to interrogate them as to their belief in the Prophet and his religion.

How many roadmarks has it effaced, etc., lit., how often has it effaced a roadmark, but the renderings given seem more in accordance with the English idiom.

On destroying the songster and the listener to the song, in Arabic *al-musmiʿ wa 's-sâmiʿ*, the one who makes listen to and delights by his melodies (*muṭrib*), and the listener delighted thereby (*ṭarib*).

It bestows no riches but to show aversion and to reverse your hopes, in Arabic *lâ mawwala illâ mâla wa âkasa 'al-âmâla*, the verb *mâla* having with the preposition *ilá* the meaning "he inclined towards, was favourable," with the preposition *ʿalá*, he was biassed against and proved obnoxious. This passage is full of assonances and alliterations, for the sake of which I would translate in the following sentences *kalama 'l-auṣâla*, to cut the limbs, somewhat freely by "to harm," and *laʿuma*, to stint, by "to harass."

And Ṣirâṭ your path.—The word *Ṣirâṭ*, which in common parlance means road, is in the Koran generally accompanied by the adjective *mustaqîm*, the straight or right road, that is, the teaching of Mohammed or Islâm. In Sûra xxxvii. 23, however, the expression occurs: "guide them to the road of hell" (*ilá ṣirâṭi 'l-jaḥîmi*), and this has probably given rise to the signification in which the word is used in the traditions and theological writings as the bridge across the infernal fire, which is described as finer than a hair and sharper than a sword. The righteous will pass over it with the swiftness of the lightning, but the wicked will soon miss their footing and will fall into the fire of hell.

And the plain your goal, or resorting place, in Arabic *wa's-sâhiratu mauridukum*, taken from Koran, lxxix. 14, where *as-sâhirah* is explained as the renewed expanse of the earth, on which the gathering of mankind on the day of judgment takes place, or as the surface of the earth, to which they are called by the blast of resurrection from their graves beneath it. This name, which means "the wakeful," is given to the earth, because it watches over vegetation day and night, and it is also one of the names of hell, because its inhabitants never close their eyes in sleep.

Are not the terrors of doomsday lying in ambush for you?—At-ṭâmmah means originally an overwhelming calamity, from *ṭamma-'lmâ'*, the water has overflowed, and is, generally with the adjective *al-kubrá*, "the great," applied to resurrection, as in verse 34 of the Sura just quoted. Another Koranic expression is *al-ḥuṭamah*, the crushing, applied to hell in Sura civ. 4, 5, where it is said that the back-biter shall be flung into it. In the text it is called "the firmly locked," because no escape from it is possible.

By the fulfilment of fate or befalling of fatality, i.e., the inevitableness of death. De Sacy, in his commentary, quotes to this passage the following lines of Mutenebbi:

"There is no help for man of that couch where once placed he never tosses from side to side;

Thereon he forgets, what erewhile has enraptured him, and the bitterness that death has made him to taste.

We are the sons of the dead, why then loathe the draught, that needs must be drained?

We stint to Time our souls, though they be his due,

For these souls are air of his air, and these bodies are dust of his dust;

If the lover bethought himself of what the end will be of the beauty that entrances him, it would not entrance him.

Yet when we see the bursting forth of the rising sun, our minds doubt not of his setting.

The shepherd in his ignorance dies, as surely as Galen with his leechcraft.

Nay, at times he will out-live him, and surpass him in the safeness of his flock."

A bride without a spot, implying that the address was composed of words devoid of dotted letters, as in the feminine termination ة the diacritical points are not considered to be inherent in the letter, but merely an accidental addition, introduced for the sake of euphony in the case of a vowel following.

And (the moment) for dispersing on the earth had come, allusion to

Koran, lxii. 10: "And when the prayer is ended disperse yourselves abroad and go in quest of the bounties of God, and often remember God."

In the rank of Al Fuzail, a celebrated devotee and ascetic in the days of Harûn ar Reshîd, who according to some authorities was born at Samarcand, the scene of the present Assembly, and whose life is to be found in Ibn Khallikân, i. 580.

THE TWENTY-NINTH ASSEMBLY.

The country of Wâsiṭ.—A town midway between Kufa and Baṣra, whence its name, or rather two towns, on either bank of the Tigris, and joined by a pontoon-bridge. The old town on the eastern bank was mostly inhabited by the chiefs of the surrounding villages. Wâsiṭ proper, on the western side of the Tigris, was founded by Al Hajjâj, who built there a cathedral mosque and a castle, which became after him the seat of the Governors of 'Irâk. A proverb says, "Thou art heedless as if thou wert a Wâsiṭî," the origin of which is told as follows: Al Hajjâj pressed the people into his service to build the new city, so that many fled and passed the night amongst the poor in the mosques of neighbouring towns. His attendants went in pursuit of them, and called out on entering such places, "Halloo! O man of Wâsiṭ," and whoever was taken by surprise and raised his head was seized and carried off.

Not paying overmuch for rent, in Arabic *lam unâfis fî ujratin*, which phrase, however, admits also of the translation, not stinting its rent. Another reading is, *lam unâqish fî ujratin*, not being close in my reckoning as to rent. The circumstances in which Ḥârith finds himself make the above rendering more probable.

Nor thy adversary keep on foot.—The word *ẓidd*, which is used both as singular and plural, occurs in the sense of enemy, Koran, xix. 85: "Those gods (taken beside God) will disavow their worship and will become their enemies."

The one of full-moon face and of pearly hue, meaning the loaf or cake of white bread, whose further description in the following lines scarcely calls for explanation in all its details. *Of pure root*, for instance, refers to the wheat, from which it is made; *who was*

imprisoned and set free, to the process of grinding the corn in the milk; *who was suckled and weaned*, to the water mixed with the flour to make it into dough, and kept from it while being kneaded.

And exchange for him the pregnant that impregnates, etc., meaning flint and steel, neither of which produces by itself the spark, but requires the co-operation of the other, so that both attributes apply to either of them. The following antithetical expressions and metaphors, as referring to the flint-stone and the spark, are equally self-evident as those employed in the description of the loaf. It must, of course, be remembered that Al Ḥârith was not possessed of the clue, and might therefore well be puzzled by the seeming contradictions.

Amongst the rows of market shops, in Arabic *naẓâ'ida 'l-ḥawânît*, where *naẓâ'id* is the pl. of *naẓîd*, a *fa'îl* (agent), in the sense of *fa'îl* (patient), "what is placed in rows," or "piled up." I refer it to the market-shops themselves, but it may also apply to their piled-up goods.

On his homeward way.—This translation is taken from De Sacy's commentary, which explains *rawâḥ*, as "returning after going," while Sherîshi takes it, in my opinion less satisfactorily, in its usual sense of "evening."

I knew that this was of Serûji growth, the feminine of the adjective of relation, indicating a thing appertaining to or proceeding from the Serûji; for, "I knew that it was a trick of Abû Zayd's."

And makes come forth the fruit from their sheaths, allusion to Koran, xli. 47: "No fruit cometh forth from its coverings, neither does any female conceive nor is she delivered, but with His knowledge."

And which of the twain was thy state? lit., upon which of thy two descriptions didst thou fly from home, openly or secretly, well provided for or deprived of means, etc.?

How to procure a loan or gift, in Arabic *qarẓ*, that for which an equivalent or compensation is returned, and *farẓ*, that which requires no compensation or return.

How then am I to make union between the neck-ring (*ghull*, a ring of iron or leather round the neck of a captive, figuratively for a shrewish wife) *and an empty purse* (*qull*, scarcity, poverty)? Ẓull, son of Ẓull, in the next clause, is a proverbial expression, for an obscure son of an obscure father. Being related to the root *ẓall*, to err, go

astray, both in a literal and metaphorical sense, it may be translated by Scamp, son of Scamp, as in the following couplet of Aṣm'aî: "Your Ziyâd is a Scamp, son of Scamp, we have nothing to do with (or wash our hands of) your Ziyâd."

Who shall . . . be proxy in and on thy behalf, in the original *wakîlan laka wa 'alaika, i.e.*, I shall be thy agent and substitute, securing and promoting thy interests, and standing security for the fulfilment of thy engagements.

If Ibrahîm, son of Adham, proposed to them, or Jebeleh, son of Ayham. —The former one of the Magnates of Khorasan, who renounced his wealth and lived in voluntary poverty, becoming proverbial for abstemiousness and disinterestedness; the latter the last king of Ghassân, equally proverbial for generosity and liberality. As only a small dowry would be expected from the first, and the second would offer a large one, the Arabic *illâ*, "but," "unless," means "neither less nor more" than the sum sanctioned by the practice of Mohammed himself. The following "on the understanding that no portion should be claimed from thee" (to be paid at once), "and thou shouldst not be forced to seek refuge in divorce" [in which case the dowry would have to be forthcoming], implies that the whole thing is a farcical plot, devised by Abû Zayd for his own benefit, and from which poor Ḥârith will have to extricate himself as best he can.

Who is sharp-witted in the interest of him he loves, a popular saying, for which see Ar. Prov., i. 717.

So the matter is all but settled, in Arabic *ka'an qad*, "as though already," where the verb *kâna*, "it had come to pass," is understood; an elliptical phrase, to which the editors of the second edition of De Sacy quote the corresponding French idiom, "c'est tout comme."

Then he cast a glance at the stars, a Koranic quotation, taken from Sura xxxvii., verse 86, where it is said of Abraham: "So gazing he gazed towards the stars and said, 'In sooth I am ill.'"

The spreader of earth's couch, the fastener of the mountains, again expressions borrowed from the Koran, lxxviii. 6; lxxxviii. 20; and xvi. 15.

An abolisher of the ordinances (or rites) of Wadd and Sûwâ', two idols of the people of Noah, the former in the shape of a man, and worshipped by the tribe Kalb, the other in female form, and

worshipped by Hamaẓâu. De Sacy and the Beyrout edition read Wudd, but in all copies of the Koran, printed or in MS., which I have consulted, I find the name spelled Wadd, and this is also the reading of my own MS. of Ḥarîri (see Koran, lxxi. 22).

To wed your bride, the honoured, reading *al-mukarramah*, which, according to a note in my MS., is warranted by the handwriting of Ḥarîri himself. Another spelling is *makzumah*, which by Moṭarrezi is interpreted as an honorary gift offered by the bridegroom to the bride before nuptials, when *mumlik* would have the meaning of *mumallik*, "putting her in possession of," *i.e.*, "presenting her with."

Void of punctuation, in Arabic *al-ʿâriyyata mina 'l-iʿjâm*, applies to Abû Zayd's address, in the same sense as the sermon in the preceding Assembly was called a bride without spots, as composed of words the letters of which have no diacritical points. The two compositions are remarkable as instances of Ḥarîri's marvellous acquaintance with and power over his language.

With concord (or ease) and sons, a congratulatory formula addressed to the bridegroom, and depending on an elliptical, "may thy union be blessed," etc. (comp. Ar. Prov., i. 170).

That the people fell prone upon their faces (lit., *chins*) . . . *like the roots of rotten palm-trees*, allusion to Koran, xvii. 109, 110. The expression, "it was not in quicker time than the eyelids meet," corresponds to our "in the twinkling of an eye," and the construction in the Arabic idiom is, to use the term of their grammarians, reversed (*'alá 'l-qalb*), for "the time which elapsed until the people fell on their faces, was not quicker than that in which the eyelids meet."

Thou hast done a hateful thing, quotation from Koran, xviii. 73: "Then they went on until they met a youth, and he (Khiẓr) slew him. Said Moses, 'Hast thou slain him who is free from guilt of blood? Assuredly now hast thou wrought a hateful thing.'"

By him whom Allah kept blessed wherever he might be, i.e., by ʿÎsá (Jesus), in allusion to Koran, xix. 31, 32: "It (the babe born by Mary) said, 'Verily I am the servant of God; He . . . hath made me blessed wherever I may be, and has enjoined me prayer and almsgiving so long as I shall live.'"

THE THIRTIETH ASSEMBLY.

Bestriding the back of [*a steed like*] *Ibnu 'n-na'âmeh.*—The Beyrout edition of the Assemblies says in a note that Ibnu 'n-na'âmeh [son of the young ostrich] was the name of a celebrated horse belonging to Al Ḥariṣ bin 'Abbâd. According to other authorities, it means a generous horse in general, the road, the sole of the foot, the leg, and human sweat, and Ḥarîri may have left purposely to his readers the choice between these various interpretations. For the expression, "with the swiftness of the ostrich," comp. Ar. Prov., ii. 151.

And garlanded [*coronated*] *with begging-baskets*, in Arabic *mukallal*, from *iklîl*, a crown, *i.e.*, surrounded with a row of ornamental knobs, here formed by the begging-baskets, as the draperies of the vestibule consisted of tattered garments. The various terms for mendicants employed in the subsequent passage are *muqaiyif*, one who follows your track [*qîfah*] to importune you with his solicitations; *mudarwiz*, probably from the Persian *darwâz* [for *dar-bâz*], an open gate, one who goes from door to door asking for alms, or offering his services; *mushaqshiq*, one who recites verses of poetry alternately with another, both standing on opposite platforms, and etymologically related to *shiqshiqah*, the throatbag of a camel, which has been mentioned before, from the verb *shaqshaq*, to emit a sound, cry out, roar; *mujalwiz*, in the argot of beggars, the rehearser of the merits and virtues of Mohammed's Companions before a popular audience in the mosques.

Reluctantly, in the Arabic idiom *mutajarri'an al-ghuṣaṣ*, gulping the choking draughts.

Then lo! there were in it richly adorned state-chairs, etc.—This display of furniture indicated, according to Sherîshi, that a wedding was to be celebrated in the house, while the begging-baskets suspended in the vestibule and the tattered garments hung around it characterized the building as an inn [*finduq*] of the beggar tribe, not appertaining to any distinct owner.

As if he were the (*a*) *son of Mâ'u 's-samâ* [water of heaven], the surname of a woman from the tribe Namir bin Ḳâsiṭ, so called on account of her beauty, whose son was Munẓir bin Imr al-Kais, king

of Ḥîra. It is also a *laqab* of 'Âmir bin Ḥarîṣah al-Azdî (father of 'Amr, who emigrated from Yemen after the bursting of the dyke 'Arim), and to whom this name was given on account of his generosity, which was as rain to his people in the times of drought. Hence his progeny, who reigned in Syria, were called Benû Mâ 'as-samâ [comp. Ar. Prov., iii., P. 1, p. 340].

The day and nights . . . morning and evening, the former in Arabic *al-malawân*, dual of *malâ*, in the sense of time, the latter *al fatayân*, dual of *fatâ*, youth.

When he had sat down on his carpet.—Zurbiyyah or *Zirbiyyah*, a word the plural of which, *Zarâbiyyu*, occurs in the Koran, lxxxviii. 16: "And carpets spread forth."

And has sternly forbidden the refusal of supplicants . . . and commanded to feed him that begs and him that refuses to beg.—An allusion to Koran, xciii. 10, "And as to him that asketh of thee, chide him not away"; and to xxii. 37, "And feed him who asketh humbly, and him who scorneth to ask though poor."

Those who know well that the supplicant and the destitute have a claim on their riches, lit., and in whose riches is a known claim, etc. Another allusion to the Koran, lxx. 24, 25.

I take refuge with Him from hearing a prayer void of intention, meaning the formula *bûrika fîka*, may a blessing be bestowed on thee, with which beggars are politely refused, and from which, in consequence of its frequent use, the noun *bûrik*, in the sense of refusal, is derived. To this the commentaries quote the lines: "Many a crone, cunning and crafty, and quick to refuse the poor, thinks that a be-blessed is enough for me, when I come forward, stretching out my right hand." The expression, "void of intention," originates in the anecdote that an Arab, who asked alms from some people, was answered with *bûrika fîka*, whereupon he retorted: "May Allah consign you to the tender mercies of a prayer, in which there is no intention."

"*And secure to the poor a share from the rich*," *i.e.*, create the institution of *zakât*, or legal alms, by which the claim of the indigent for assistance from the rich is acknowledged and vouchsafed. The same idea is repeated lower down in the words: *he made obligatory the claims on the possessions of the wealthy*, and it runs, as Sherîshi remarks, in varied forms through the whole of the address, naturally

enough, as the preacher speaks for the edification of the begging fraternity.

And lowered his wing to the lowly, or showed humility to the humble, allusion to Koran, xvii. 25.

As well as his elected of the people of the stone-bench, in Arabic *ahl aṣ-ṣuffah*, a name given to a number of aliens amongst the companions of Mohammed, the so-called "guests of Islâm," poor strangers without friends or place of abode, who took shelter on a stone-bench, roofed with palm-branches, in the porch of the Temple of Medina.

For He said so that you may know: "*O ye men*," etc., quotation from Koran, xlix. 13.

Abû 'd-Darrâj Wallâj, son of Kharrâj, fanciful names, truly appropriate for members of the craft, which may be translated, Father of the Tramp, In-slipper, son of Out-goer, the last two epithets probably meaning one who makes himself at home under all circumstances, and knows how to extricate himself from all difficulties. Equally graphic are the names given to the wooed bride: *Kanbas, daughter of Abû 'Anbas*, somewhat like Spitfire, daughter of the Sire of the frowning Lion. There is much humour in this Assembly, which, I hope, will be duly appreciated by my readers.

And if you fear poverty or want, Allah will give you a sufficiency out of His abundance, quotation from Koran, ix. 28. In the Koranic passage the dreaded event is explained as to be brought about through the breaking off commercial relations, here, of course, it is apprehended from the increase of family.

By Him who created the heavens one above another, etc., allusion to Koran, lxvii. 3.

Whose engrossing cares distract the mind; or, Whose carking sorrow sore perplexes and distracts me.—A somewhat free translation of the Arabic *khaṭbu-hâ khaṭbun marîjun*, lit., whose calamity is a perplexing calamity (comp. Koran, l. 5, where the word *marîj* is joined with *amr*, "perplexed therefore is their state."

THE THIRTY-FIRST ASSEMELY.

Travel fills the provision-bags, i.e., increases a man's wealth, in accordance with the saying, "motion produces and rest is barren." Readers of the "Arabian Nights" will remember the numerous quotations of verses in praise of travel contained in it, to which may be added, from De Sacy's commentary, the following lines of Gurrudurru (for whom see Ibn Khallikân, i. 500):

"Press on thy camels to the open plain, and leave fair damsels to abide in palaces.

For those who cling to their countries are like the dwellers in the graves.

If it were not for resorting to foreign parts the pearls of the seas would not adorn the necks of beauty.

Rise and bestir thyself briskly in the lands, for he who sticks at home is looked down upon,

As the Pawn is made little of until, when he moves on, he queens it right royally."

The last simile, taken from chess, is a translation into our phraseology of the game of the Arabic, *iẓâ sâra ṣâra farzânan*, when he travels, he becomes a wazîr.

I made up my mind, etc., in Arabic *istajashtu*, I asked for an army (*jaish*) and help from it. The following "started" is in the original *aṣ'adtu*, which generally has the meaning of "I ascended," but must here evidently be taken in the sense of *tawajjahtu*, "I travelled in the direction of."

To the mother of cities.—Ummu 'l-qurá, a name given by the Mohammedans to Mecca, because she is the first and therefore maternal city created by Allah, and because the people of all other towns resort to her (*ya'ummûna-há*).

So between night-faring and journeying by day, between trotting and ambling.—In Arabic *baina idlâjin wa ta'wîbin wa îjâfin wa taqrîbin*, infinitives of verbs, signifying various modes of travelling on camels, amongst which *îjâf*, the verbal noun of the fourth form of *wajf*, occurs in the Koran, lix. 6. I have translated it by "trotting," but its literal meaning is "running in leaps" (*sâra 'l-'anaq*).

That which rescues on the day of the mutual call, that is, of resurrection, in allusion to Koran, xl. 34: "And, O my people! I indeed fear for you the day of mutual outcry," when, according to vii. 42,

"The inmates of Paradise shall cry to the inmates of the fire, 'now have we found what our Lord promised us to be true; have ye too found what your Lord promised you to be true?' And they shall answer 'Yes'; and a Herald shall proclaim between them, 'The curse of God be upon the evil-doers.'" Other commentators, however, explain it as the day of assembly, the expression *tanadâ 'l-qaum* being synonymous with *ijtama'û*.

Flocking together from the mountain-paths, an-nâsilîna min al-fijâj, for which comp. Koran, xxi. 96.

That piety is the tucking up of sleeves.—In Arabic *nazwu 'l-ardân*, which is usually called *tashmîr*, and done to show readiness for work, especially in travelling. The word *nazw* may also be taken in the sense of putting off, in which case the sleeves would be *pars pro toto*, and the expression would indicate the stripping of the body from all other garments, in order to don the *iḥrâm*, or pilgrim-cloak. But as the latter act does not precede, but follow the separation from family and country, the former interpretation seems preferable.

In making for yonder building, meaning the Ka'bah, to which the preacher had alluded when he said at the beginning of his address: "Do ye comprehend what ye are about to face?"

For by Him, who prescribed the rites for the devout.—Here in particular the ceremonies of the pilgrimage, for a description of which see the article Ḥajj in Hughes' "Dictionary of Islâm," pp. 155-159; Burkhardt's "Travels in Arabia," i. 363; and Burton's "Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina."

The girding with the izâr profits [*avails*] *not when one is burdened with iniquities.*—In the original *ma'a 'l-iztilâ'i bi 'l-auzâr*. The last word is the plural of *wizr*, "a heavy load," and metaphorically "crime," "iniquity," which occurs in Koran, vi. 164: "No soul shall labour but for itself; and no burdened one (*wâziratun*) shall bear (*yazir*) another's burden (*wizr*)."

None prospers by visiting mount 'Arafât.—In Arabic *bi-'arafata*, without article and imperfectly declined. In this form the word is the technical term for the ceremony of visiting the holy mountain, the name of which latter is *'arafât*, a plural without singular. Another term for the said ceremony is *ta'rîf*, verbal noun of the second form, which is explained as *wuqûfun bi'arifât*, the station on mount 'Arafât, and which occurs lower down in connection with

ifâẓah, the running down or dispersion from it, as in Koran, ii. 194 : "And when ye disperse from 'Arafât."

For a losing bargain of dissemblers it suffices that they plant and reap not, lit., the sufficiency of dissemblers with regard to or for deception is that they plant and reap not, for they are sufficiently punished thereby. The accusative *ghabnan* is analogous to that in Koran, iv. 47 ; *wa kafá bi 'llâhi naṣîran*, and God is a sufficient helper, lit., suffices as to a helper.

For, lo, no hidden deed shall remain hidden from the Compassionate, allusion to Koran, lxix. 18.

And the threader of the pearl-strings that he had displayed, lit., *recited* (*anshada-hâ*). Naṣîf al-Yazaji objects to the change of vowel between *anshada*, the reading of De Sacy and most manuscripts, and the preceding *anshudu*, "I was searching for." He proposes *unshadu-hâ*, aor. pass. of the fourth form, in the sense of "which had been recited to me." In this case the verb would govern two accusatives, one of which has become nominative in the passive voice, the admissibility of which seems doubtful, and, moreover, the change of vowel is not avoided thereby. The editors of the second edition of De Sacy, while preserving his reading in the text, remark in a note, that if an alteration should appear desirable they would suggest *unshida-hâ*, when the meaning would be, "which I am reciting or quoting throughout my narrative." Curiously enough this suggestion is confirmed by my own MS., and it has certainly much to recommend it.

Until he had climbed up (*tawaqqala*) *one of the mountains*, to which comp. Ar. Prov., ii. 840 : *auqalu min ghufrin*, "a better climber than the young of a chamois or mountain-goat."

He made hand fall upon hand, i.e., he clapped his hands, as to mark time. The word *banân*, which literally means the finger-tips, is here used for hand, as in the Koran, viii. 12, it is used, according to some commentators, for hands and feet, or the extremities in general.

Curing (lit., *tanning*) *it with sore repentance before the hide all through is rotten*, a popular saying, for which comp. Ar. Prov., ii. 346.

THE THIRTY-SECOND ASSEMBLY.

As the verbal explanations of the legal ambiguities contained in this Assembly have been, for the convenience of the reader, given in parenthesis along with the translation, I can restrict myself in these notes chiefly to some additional illustrations, and the references to the Koran and the Arabic Proverbs.

When I had completed the rites of the Hajj, and absolved the duties of [*the shout*] *Labbaika, and the out-pour of the blood of the sacrifice.*—In Arabic *waẓâ'ifa 'l-ḥajji wa 's-sajj*, the former being synonymous with *talbiyah* the intonation of the prayer beginning with *labbaika* [I am ready for thy service, etc.], which is chanted with a loud voice during the pilgrimage, especially on the last stage before Mecca; the latter meaning the shedding of a victim's blood on the day of sacrifice, both of which are by a tradition declared to be the most meritorious parts of the pilgrimage.

With a travelling company of the Benû Shaibah, a tribe descending from Shaibah, who, according to Sherîshi, is identical with 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, Mohammed's grandfather. Other authorities say that he was a son of 'Uṣmân, son of Ṭalḥah, son of 'Abd ad-Dâr, son of Kusaiy, in the custody of whose descendants the keys of the Ka'bah are kept until the present day.

And to disengage myself from the tribe of those who perform the Hajj and neglect him [*Mohammed*].—Allusion to a reported saying of Mohammed's: "He who performs the pilgrimage, and visits me not, wrongs me."

So I was bewildered between fear that made me lag, in Arabic *yuṣabbituni*, an expression borrowed from Koran, ix. 46: "But God was averse to their marching forth and made them laggards; and it was said, 'Sit ye at home with those who sit.'"

Running as if they were flocking to some idol, quotation from Koran, lxx. 43, where, however, the interpreters differ as to whether the word *nuṣub* is to be taken for "standard" or "idol."

The father of lies and tricks, in Arabic *zû 'sh-shuqari wa'l-buqari*, where *shuqar* is explained as "downright lie," and *buqar* as an *ittibâ'*, or complementary apposition based on similarity of sound (comp. Ar. Prov., i. 162 and 309). The word translated by *mischief* in the next

line is *fawâqir*, pl. of *fâqirah*, which occurs in the Proverb *'amala bi-hi 'l-fâqirata*, meaning according to Maydâni, he has done him an injury that breaks his vertebræ. Similarly we read in the Koran, lxxv. 28: "As if they thought that some calamity would be inflicted on them" (*an yuf'ala bihâ fâqiratun*).

And gathered his garment in the approved style, lit., he wrapped himself up in the deaf fashion (*aṣ-ṣammâ'u*), said to be thus called because it left no opening, as the ear is deaf when it is stopped up. The learned in the law of Islâm describe it minutely in various ways, and according to Abû Obayd, quoted in the *Ṣiḥâḥ*, their reason for discussing it is that Mohammed commended this manner of dress, hence my translation of the phrase. The same observation applies to *al-qafdâ'*, manner of wearing the turban, which precedes in the text, and the following *al-qurfuṣâ'*, manner of sitting, has been described in vol. i., p. 412, which description justifies my rendering. "he was sitting with his hand knitted in front of his knees."

For by Him who has created the heavens, etc.—Allusion to Koran vi. 79, and ii. 29.

Who are averse to the daughters of some one else, in Arabic *'an banâti ghairin*, meaning lies, falsehood, any deviation from truth. A poet says: "When thou comest some one else's daughters are on the spot, and when thou turnest thy back they hasten their departure." Another form of the expression occurs in the proverb: *jâ'a bi 'sh-shuqari wa'l-buqari wa banâti ghiyar*, where *ghiyar* is plural of *ghairah*, probably in the sense of jealousy, the underlying idea apparently being that lie is jealous of truth.

The cold has thrown him down.—The meaning "sleep" given in the reply of the legist to the word *bard*, which in common parlance signifies "cold," is borne out by Koran, lxxviii. 24: "No sleep shall they taste therein nor any drink, save boiling water and running sores," and by the proverb *a'l-bardu yamna'u 'l-barda*, cold prevents sleep. In de Sacy's Commentary the proverb is quoted *man'u 'l-bardi 'l-bardu*, when the sense would seem to be, "the preventive of (feeling) cold is sleep," perhaps a grim travesty of the fact that people overtaken by the cold sleep themselves to death.

What sayest thou with regard to one who has used sand for his ablution? in Arabic *ta-yammamu*, for which practice, allowed by Koran, v. 9, if water is not available, see Dict. of Islâm, p. 631.

And let him avoid the dirty one, an injunction which is based on a tradition according to which the Prophet exhorted the believers to keep their court-yards clean.

And thou art free of blame, words addressed by Kosayr, the freedman of Jathîmet al-Abrash, to the latter's nephew, 'Amr bin 'Adî, whom he had urged to expel him with his nose cut off, and who refused to do it, saying, "I am not the man to treat thee thus, nor art thou the man to deserve such treatment." "Do it," replied Kosayr, "and thou art free of blame," which answer passed into proverb (see Ar. Prov., ii. 219, and comp. the Note to Assembly XXVII., p. 190, above.

A traveller, etc.—As to the exemption from the fast of Ramadân for travellers, etc., the Koran, ii. 181, says: "But he who is sick, or upon a journey, shall fast a like number of other days."

By Him who has made the chase lawful, i.e., by Allah, in allusion to Koran, v. 3: "And when all (connected with the pilgrimage) is over, then take to the chase."

And also she was menstruous.—This interpretation of the word *ẓaḥikat* refers to Koran, xi. 74: "And his wife was standing by, and became menstruous; and We announced Isaac to her; and after Isaac Jacob." It must, however, be remarked, that Baydâwi and most of the other Commentators explain the word in its usual meaning and in accordance with our Bible.

Is the buying of (meaning on the part of) a caller from a herdsman allowed? etc.—With regard to this question, a marginal note in my MS. remarks: "It is said that *ad-dâ'î,* the caller, means the cock; others say it is used for '*abd,*' slave, as *râ'î* (herdsman) stands for *saiyid,* lord or master, and that the meaning is, may the judge sell the slave against, *i.e.,* in spite of the unwillingness of a bankrupt master, who is debarred from the disposal of his property (*majḥûr*), a proceeding which is in perfect accordance with the law." *Bai'u 'd-dâ'i* may, however, also mean buying on the part of the caller, in whatever meaning the word may be taken (in Assembly xxvii. it is applied to the Muezzin, which would explain the following *dâ'î,* collector of the legal alms), and in this case the preposition *'alá* stands for *min,* "from," as in Koran, lxxxiii. 2, after the word *iktâlû:* "Who when they take by measure from (*'alá*) others, exact the full." As for the answer, there is no difference of opinion

amongst the commentators; the selling or buying of the *dâ'i* in the sense of "remainder of milk left in the udder," is forbidden, like that of the fœtus in an animal's womb, because it is *majhûl*, an object unknown as to its quality or quantity, a subtlety in the Mohammedan Law, which here is obviously more of a theoretical than practical nature.

Saqar, a hawk, and also date-juice, which it is as unlawful to barter for the fruit, as meat for the living animal (see p. 47, l. 7 from the bottom).

Yea, and it may be inherited from him when he has died, or people may inherit from him after his death, indicating that by his act he ceases not to be a righteous Moslem.

What sayest thou with regard to the dead body of an infidel (as article of food)?—This can be taken literally, when the abomination would be self-evident to excess. But a less repulsive interpretation may be an animal slaughtered by an infidel, which would be as unlawful as the carcase of an animal after its natural death, because he had not invoked the name of Allah on killing it.

May a pitcher be bought from the Benû Aṣfar? etc.—Benû Aṣfar, usually applied to the Greeks, stands here for the enemies of Islam in general, from whom it would be for a Moslem, if not forbidden, at least highly objectionable, to buy offensive or even defensive weapons, as sword or helmet, which may purposely be of bad make, or have been employed against his co-religionists. This translation takes the preposition *'alá* in the sense of *min* (see the note above), but as *bai'* is bartering, *i.e.*, giving or taking in exchange, it seems evident that the same preposition, which in case of buying means "from," has in the case of a sale the meaning "to," and the objection may be against selling weapons to infidels, or against both transactions, buying from and selling to them.

He replied: "Nay, nor to the co-partner in a yellow she-camel."—The point of this is that the right of pre-emption (*shu'fah*) applies to immovables, and the expected answer, if the word *ṣaḥrâ'* is taken in its current meaning, "field," would be yes, while Abû Zayd's negative reply presupposes for it the more recondite meaning, in which it can be as little an object of pre-emption as a camel or gold.

This is worthier of acceptance, because not being pregnant.

According to the words of the Koran: "Behold to Thee we have

returned," in Arabic *innâ hudnâ ilaika*, Sura vii., verse 158. By a singular mistake, Rodwell translates: "Verily to Thee we are guided," probably misled by Flügel, who gives it in his Concordance, p. 203, under *hadá*, the passive of which, however, would be *hudînâ*, instead of under *hûd*, of which *hudnâ* is the preterite active.

A camel tied to the tomb of her master, etc.—If the Arabic *balîyah* is taken in this sense, then the word *ṣabr* signifies the act of binding, and the custom itself, as a superstition of the pre-Islamitic times, is strongly condemned; while *ṣabru 'l-balîyah* in the sense of patience under calamity is highly meritorious.

And also he helped, strengthened, honoured, in which meaning the word *ta'zîr* occurs (Koran, xlviii. 9): "That ye may believe on God and on His Apostle; and may assist Him, and honour Him, and praise Him, morning and evening."

Afqar, he impoverished and also he lent a camel to ride upon her back, the connecting link between which two significations is the word *fiqâr*, vertebræ, inasmuch as poverty breaks a man's back, while the camel carries him on hers.

A kind of embroidered stuff, meaning that one who abstains from wearing such, *i.e.*, from habits of luxury in general, shows wisdom and discretion, and is therefore eminently fit to be appointed judge.

One who denies a debt.—The interpretation of the word *'âbid*, by "one who denies or repudiates," is given by some commentators in explaining Koran, xliii. 81: "Say 'if the God of Mercy had a son, the first then would I be to deny him,'" where Rodwell translates "to worship him."

As if he had committed an open robbery, in Arabic *ghaṣaba*, he has taken with violence, the punishment for which is not amputation, but imprisonment, etc.

THE THIRTY-THIRD ASSEMBLY.

At a time when I had come to Tiflis, in Arabic Taflîsu and Tiflîsu, the well-known city in the Caucasus.

Together with a number of paupers.—In some MSS. *ma'a zumratin* (in others *ma'a 'uṣbatin*) *mafâlîsa*, where the latter word is not dependent on, but in apposition to the former respectively, while De Sacy and my own MS. read simply *ma'a mafâlîsa* (an imperfectly declined plural).

Then the people fastened [bound] their loops to him, i.e., they sát down to listen to him, an idiom for which compare vol. i., p. 412.

Does not eye-witnessing dispense with hearsay? and the smoke reveal the fire?—I have translated *amá* as interrogative, but it may equally well be taken as the particle of *tantîh*, and rendered by "assuredly," meaning: "You see with your own eyes, without my telling you, what my condition is, and my appearance sufficiently indicates the state of my affairs."

Yet erewhile I was one of those who possess and bestow.—The word *mâla* is explained by the commentators by *tamawwala*, he was wealthy, in which sense it would be synonymous with the preceding *maluka*, he possessed riches. But it has also the meaning, "he gave part of his property to others," and this interpretation seems to me preferable, as it conforms in idea with the phrase, *rajulun mâlun nâlun*, a man who is rich and bountiful, in which *mâlun* corresponds to *maluka*, and *nâlun* to *mâla*.

But calamities ceased not to subvert.—The word translated by subvert (*tashat*) occurs in the Koran, xx. 64: "For then will He destroy you by a punishment." One of its derivatives is *suht* or *suhut*, anything unlawful, as leading to perdition, especially applied to usury in Koran, v. 46, 67, 68.

Who trailed his sleeves along in luxury.—The usual phrase is, he trailed his skirt, but the length of the sleeves of a costly robe pictures still more forcibly the extravagance of Oriental habits and habiliments.

Or to whom the tidings of daughters have been brought.—Allusion to Koran, xvi. 60, 61: "For when the birth of a daughter is announced to any one of them, dark shadows settle on his face, and he is sad: He hideth himself from the people because of the bad news: shall he keep it with disgrace, or bury it in the ground?" For the practice of the Arabs of the Ignorance to bury infant daughters alive, compare the exhaustive note in vol. i., p. 434, to the passage: "Give life to one buried alive." I repeat from it here the final line of the poem quoted from the Hamâseh in explanation of the reasons which may have induced a father to put an end to his daughter's days: "She desires my life, but I long for her death, through compassion on her; for to women death is the most generous quest."

Beguiled by the beauty of his delivery, along with his disease.—The

Arabic *ma'a dâ'ihi*, together with his ailment, implies that his listeners, while delighted with his utterance, were at the same time moved to compassion for him by his well-simulated palsy.

That which was hidden in their belts and concealed in their bosoms.—The words translated by "belts" and "bosoms" respectively are *khuban*, pl. of *khubnah*, and *ṣuban*, pl. of *ṣubnah*, which the native dictionaries explain in almost identical terms as those parts of a garment which serve as receptacles for money and other objects.

So take this trifle, in Arabic *ṣubâbah*, rest of water at the bottom of a well, and metaphorically used for anything of small value.

And reckon it neither a miss, nor a hit, i.e., as a thing neither to be disdained nor to be made much of, and given more to show our goodwill towards thee, than to lay thee under the obligation of thanks.

Made off stumbling on his road, lit., snatching his ways with stumbling.

And is indulgent with thee.—In the original *man yanfuqu 'alai-ka*, which is explained by "one who buries thy faults in a hole" (*nafaq*), *i.e.*, veils and conceals them. Others take the verb in the sense of having currency, and therefore being acceptable, so that the meaning would be, who by the pleasantness of his manners makes himself agreeable to thee.

And hast met with a prize, so cling to it.—A proverb applied to one who has obtained his wish, and for which see Ar. Prov., ii. 326.

Then he laughed long, and stood before me a sound or perfect man.—The Arabic for "long" is here *maliyyan*, which occurs in Koran, xix. 47: "Begone from me for a length of time." The final part of the clause is an allusion to the same Sura, verse 17: "And we sent our spirit to her, and he appeared before her like a perfect man."

With no ailment in his body.—Ailment is in the text *qalabah*, which stands originally for an illness which makes a man toss on his couch, but is used, as here, in a more general sense in the proverb, *mâ bi-hi qalabah*, there is no ailment or blemish in him (Ar. Prov., ii. 610).

And at his feigned palsy, lit., at the falsehood or lie of his palsy (*'alá kaẓibi laqwati-hi*). Similar, though with the state of construction reversed, the Koran says, xii. 18: "And they (Joseph's brethren)

brought his shirt with the blood of lie (*i.e.*, with false blood) upon it."

THE THIRTY-FOURTH ASSEMBLY.

When I crossed the deserts towards Zabîd.—This is a prosperous town in Yemen, the largest and most important after Ṣanâ', the scene of the first Assembly, from which it is about forty parasangs distant. It is abundantly irrigated, and therefore rich in gardens and orchards, which grow fruit of various kinds, especially bananas.

Whom I had reared until he reached the full vigour of life, reckoned by the Arabs from fifteen to forty years of age. The word used for it in the original is *ashudda-hu*, which is variously explained as plural of *shadd*, like *aflus* from *fals*, or of *shudd*, like *awudd* from *wudd*, or of *shiddah*, like *an'um* from *ni'mah*, or lastly as a singular without plural, like *ânuk* (tin).

And trained until his straightness had waxed perfect, a simile taken from the straightening of a lance, here to be taken in a moral sense

Therefore needs his good services had won him my heart, literally had attached themselves or clung to my heart, a proverbial expression, for which see Ar. Prov., ii. 510 and iii., P. 2, 493.

When the sole of his foot was turned up and his voice had been silenced.—This translation takes the word *na'âmah* in the sense *bâṭinu-'l-qadam*, mentioned above, p. 198. According to Sherîshi it has also the meaning of "bier," and of "gallows-tree," the being raised of either of which is a popular idiom for death and destruction. Others explain "when his ostrich had fled," *i.e.*, when he had departed life, in analogy with the saying *shâlat na'âmatu 'l-qaum*, the people's ostrich has taken himself off, when they leave a place or disperse. As for "his voice had been silenced," *sakanat na'matu-hu*, it is taken from the imprecation "may God silence his voice," *askata 'llâhu na'mata-hu*, whence some commentators propose to read in the present passage *sakatat*, "was silent," instead of *sakanat*, the original meaning of which is "was at rest," and tallies better with the secondary signification of *na'meh*, movement or motion [*ḥarakah*].

Who might be a stopgap for my needs.—*Sadâd*, here rendered by stopgap, is, according to Maydâni's remark on this proverbial

expression, a small quantity of milk which has dried up in the udder and obstructs the flow of the milk (Ar. Prov., i. 616).

Who gives satisfaction when he is tried.—The final part of the clause is in Arabic *izâ qulliba*, literally when he is turned about, which is paraphrased by, when he is stripped, to examine the soundness of his limbs.

That not every one who undertakes a work carries it through, and that nothing will scratch my skin as well as my own nail.—The first clause of this proposition alludes to the following couplet, taken from a poem of Zohayr in praise of Hârim bin Sinân:

> "Thou carriest through what thou hast undertaken,
> While some undertake but fail to carry through."

The second is an adaptation of the proverb "Naught scratches my back as well as my own hand" (Ar. Prov., ii. 602), to which Sherîshi quotes some lines of the celebrated Imâm Ash-Shâfi'i, in which also the word "nail" is substituted for the word "hand" of the proverb, and which exhort, like the latter itself, to self-exertion in preference to reliance on others.

With the yellow and the white, meaning gold denars and silver dirhems.

Who if thou stumble says to thee, "Rise to thy feet."—*La'an* or *la'* for *la'an laka* is an exclamation in the sense of a prayer that he may rise sound and safe, addressed to one who has tripped or fallen, and is opposed to the imprecatory formula *ta'san*, fall or perdition on thee, which occurs Koran xlvii. 9: "But as for the infidels, let them perish!" In a disputed passage of the Ḥamâseh *fa'l-ta'su adnâ la-hâ min an yuqâla la'an* is explained by Ḥarîri himself in his *Durrat al-Ghawwâs* by "she is worthier to be prayed for than to be prayed against," while Tabrîzî in his Commentary reads the initial word *fa'n-na'shu*, and interprets: "she has sooner risen than one could say to her Rise!" The origin of *la'an la-ka* is said to be the elliptical idiom *la'alla-ka* "haply thou mayst," here mentally supplemented with "rise in safety."

And were it not, by God, for life's straitening stress (*zanku 'aishin*).—Compare Koran xx. 123: "But whoso turneth away from My warning, his truly shall be a straitened life," *i.e.*, a life of misery (*ma'îshatun ẓankan*).

I would not sell him for the realms that Kisrâ rules.—To this the commentators quote the following line of a poet to the same effect: "Necessity, O Mother of Mâlik, at times compels a man to part with belongings which otherwise he would guard with a niggard's care."

I fancied him one of the youths of the garden of delight, and said, "This is not a man but an honoured angel."—Allusion to Koran lvi. 11, 12, and 17: "These are they who shall be brought nigh to God in gardens of delight . . . immortal youths go round about to them with goblets and ewers and a cup from a fountain." The second clause is a quotation of the words with which, in Sûra xii. 31, the Egyptian ladies praise the beauty of Joseph, a quotation which, as the sequel will show, proves ominous on the present occasion.

Whether his elocution matched his comeliness, and how his utterance tallied with the fairness of his countenance.—Literally where his eloquence was from his brightness of face, and how his tongue or language from his fairness, the preposition *min*, from, here meaning "considered apart from" or "in contrast with."

So I turned aside from him.—In Arabic *ẓarabtu 'an-hu ṣafḥan*, another Koranic idiom, taken from ch. xliii. 4: "Shall We then turn aside this warning from you as if with repulsion, because ye are a people who transgress?" The accusative *ṣafḥan* is in this passage, according to the most plausible explanations, an infinitive of a verb synonymous with *ẓarab*, and corroborative of the idea contained in the latter verb, which we might here translate "I struck out and away from him."

Then listen: Joseph I am, ay, Joseph I am.—Allusion to Koran, xii. 90: "They said, 'Canst thou indeed be Joseph?' He said, 'I am Joseph, and this is my brother.'"

But he did not soar whither I had soared.—*Hallaqa*, lit., he described circles (*ḥalqah*), is applied to a bird, which rises into the air, and the phrase means here, "he demanded not such a high price for the boy as I had expected him to do, and was ready to pay," and in similar manner the following, *nor held he on to that to which I held on*, signifies, "he showed less eagerness to keep the youth than I was anxious to take possession of him."

That every thing sold cheap proves dear, a piece of worldly wisdom

which I dare say most of my readers have bought sometime or other with their own experience.

Both eyes of the lad flowed over with tears, more abundant than the tear-flow of the clouds, literally, they brimmed over, and not with the brimming of the tears of the clouds, an idiom for which compare (vol. i., p. 304) Chenery's note on the phrase, "With an earliness beyond the earliness of the crow."

The hungry bellies, in Arabic *a'l-karishu 'l-jiyâ'u*, an idiom remarkable in more than one respect. *Karish* is, literally, the stomach of a ruminant, and denotes metaphorically a man's children, family, or household. In this sense we shall meet with it in Assembly XLVIII., *attakhiẓtu-hum karishî wa 'aibatî*, which may approximately be translated: "I took them for my kith and kin," and is used by Harîri in allusion to a tradition according to which Mohammed applied the expression to the Anṣâr, or Helpers, *i.e.*, the Meccans who joined him after his flight to Medina, and the inhabitants of the latter town who embraced his cause. The word *'aibah* means originally a chest or wardrobe to keep clothes in, and has become a popular metaphor for intimate friends as depositories of a man's secrets (comp. Ar. Prov., i. 59). In the present passage of our text it is further to be noticed that the singular *karish* is followed by the plural *jiyâ*, for which the native grammarians adduce two reasons. The most natural explanation is that the noun *karish*, though grammatically a singular, is here logically a plural, and may therefore fitly be accompanied by an adjective in that number. The other view of the case is that the plural of the adjective intensifies its meaning, and is joined to the substantive singular, in order to qualify the one subject, as it were, with the aggregate hunger of several subjects, a rather far-fetched explanation, here only given as an instance of the subtlety of grammatical discussion in which the Arabs delight. As another etymological curiosity, I may mention that the word *al-'aibah* figures in the parlance of the common people as a corruption of *'al-lu'aibah*, diminutive of *lu'bah*, a toy for children, a doll, from the totally different verb *la'b*, playing, sporting.

This is Sakâbi, not for loan or sale.—*Sakâbi*, an indeclinable noun terminating in *kasrah*, is the name of a famous horse belonging to a man of the tribe Temîm, who refused to sell it with the above words.

It was thus called from its swiftness, compared to the rushing of water when poured out.

My value was lost to them, and what a value.—Literally, "they have lost me, and what a man have they lost," meaning, according to the commentators, they have not understood or appreciated my worth. This is an instance of the rhetorical figure *taẓmîn*, which consists in the quotation of part of a well-known couplet or number of couplets to apply it to the circumstances of the quoter. The words are borrowed from a poem ascribed to Umaiyah bin Aṣ-Ṣalt, by others to 'Abdallah bin 'Amr bin Uṣmân, and the conclusion of the line is: "lost for the day of battle or stopping breaches." The words may also signify "They have undone me," and if taken in this double meaning, are more particularly addressed to Abû Zayd; if taken in the sense of "lost," they contain at the same time another warning to Ḥarîth to be on his guard.

And distinguish him not from the lobes of my liver, in the Arabic idiom, "from the slices of my liver," meaning from my children, in the sense in which one of the poets says: "Our children are amongst us but our hearts walking on the ground."

I commend thee to the keeping of one who is an excellent master or patron.—Allusion to Koran, viii. 41: "But if they turn their back, know ye, that God is your patron: Excellent patron and excellent helper!"

For clear as daylight should it be what Joseph meant, namely, that my sale was as unlawful as that of freeborn Joseph.

And (had) read to him the Sura, i.e., told him our story, in playful allusion to the chapter of the Koran in which is related the story of Joseph. For the following, *he who has given a warning is excused*, comp. Ar. Prov., xi. 119.

For whose wound there is no retaliation.—In Arabic *jurḥu-hu jubâran, i.e.*, whose blood might be shed with impunity, as it is said in tradition, that there is no retaliation or blood-money due for the blood of 'Ajams, or non-Arabs. The expression *jubâr* for the more usual *ḥadar* occurs in the legal maxim founded on another tradition, *al-ma'danu jubârun*, which means that for one who has been killed by the collapse of a mine no retaliation can be exacted from the owner or the employer of the man.

Then I gnashed my teeth.—*Taḥarraqtu*, the fifth conjugation of

ḥaraqa, with fathah on the second radical, he kindled, etc., may mean, "I burned with rage." But Sherîshi explains it, "I ground my teeth, so that they gave forth a sound, on account of the violence of my anger," which is the signification of the form *harîqa*, with medial *kasrah* of the primitive verb.

Thy money is not lost, if it has taught thee a lesson, in the original: "Not has gone from thy substance that which has admonished thee;" *i.e.*, the money which thou hast lost will not be thrown away if it teaches thee to be more careful of the remainder, and he who has roused thee to circumspection and cautiousness has not done thee an injury (comp. Ar. Prov., i. 435).

He puffed his cheek and cracked it at me in derision.—Azraṭa, he produced a sound in bad odour with good company, means here he produced an imitation of that sound, and has obtained the sanction of tradition, which reports that Mohammed, on visiting the public treasury, expressed in this manner his contempt for the gold and silver coin accumulated therein.

Heretofore the tribes sold Joseph, though they were what people know they were.—Under the tribes (*asbâṭ*) the sons of Jacob are understood, and the laconical expression, *wa-humu humu*, literally, "*and they* (*are*) *they*," signifies, "They are what they are known to be," *i.e.*, revered patriarchs. The words in the preceding line, "I am not the first (lit. an innovator) therein," are taken from Koran, xlvi. 8: "Say, 'I am not the first of Apostles (lit., new amongst them).'"

I am not of those who sting twice and make one tread upon two cinders.—The first part of this sentence is an allusion to, or rather perversion of, a reported saying of Mohammed's: "The believer is not bitten twice from out of a snake's hole." In the second part, "upon two cinders" stands for "twice upon cinders or burning coals," and the meaning is, "I am not one who injures the same person a second time."

Flinging the remembrance of his deed behind me.—In Arabic, *nabaẓtu fa'lata-hu ẓihriyyan*, which last word occurs Koran xi. 94: "He said, 'O my people! does my family stand higher in your esteem than I do? Cast ye Him behind your back,'" where Baydâwi explains *ẓihriyyan* by *manbûẓ warâ'a 'ẓ-ẓahr*.

THE THIRTY-FIFTH ASSEMBLY.

In my roamings I met at Shiraz.—Shiraz, in Arabic an imperfectly declined noun or diptote, one of the principal cities of Persia, of which Sherîshi gives a glowing account in his Commentary, and which is familiar to the friends of Oriental literature as the birth-place of the Persian poet Hafiz, and many other men of note.

See how their fruit would fulfil the promise of their blossom, literally, how their fruit would be from, *i.e.*, in comparison with their blossom, an idiom for which see a preceding note, p. 213 above.

Who had well-nigh encompassed the two goals of life, in the original "the two lives," *i.e.*, that of increase of strength up to forty, and that of decrease up to eighty, according to others, up to sixty and hundred and twenty respectively. The critics blame Ḥarîri for connecting in this passage two verbs of identical meaning, *kâda yunâhizu*, as if we would say, "he was near approaching." But I find that *nâhaza*, with the accusative *aṣ-ṣaida*, game, is explained by *bâdara-hu*, he overtook or reached it, and feel, therefore, justified in my translation, the terms of which seem perfectly legitimate.

A man exists by the two things smallest in him, meaning his tongue and his heart, or as a poet in the Ḥamâseh puts it:

"One half of man is his tongue, the other half his heart; what remains is but an image of flesh and blood.

"Many a man who pleases thee when silent waxes taller or smaller by his converse." (Ar. Prov., ii. 635, 922.)

Counting its aloes as common wood, i.e., being gifted with surpassing eloquence themselves, they made little of its choicest points. For the word *khiṭâb*, address, many explanations are given, but there is little doubt that it applies here to that branch of philological science which treats of rhetoric or the rules of elevated diction and composition. The expression *faṣlu 'l-khiṭâb*, here translated with the "chapter or section of rhetoric," has occurred in the second Assembly, vol. i., p. 114, towards the end, where I would render it "the discrimination of his address," or "his discriminate eloquence," while Chenery prefers "the sagacity of his judgment," in accordance with Koran, xxxviii. 19: "And We established his (David's) kingdom: and wisdom, and skill to pronounce clear decisions, did

We bestow on him" (comp. the note on the passage, vol. i., p. 291).

But he uttered no word of explanation nor made he his meaning clear by any sign, literally, he explained not with a word, nor cleared he up by any sign, the Arabic preposition *'an*, "from," in the terminology of the grammarians here being used *li 'l-isti'ânah*, that is, standing for "by means of."

But asked what are his endowments, literally, what is his portion (*khalâq*), in allusion to Koran, iii. 71: "Verily they who barter their engagement with God, and their oaths, for some paltry price—These! no portion for them in the world to come!"

Now when he had captivated all their senses, in Arabic *fa-lammâ khalaba kulla khilbin*, the literal rendering of which would be, "when he had beguiled every pericardium."

Make known to us the shell of thy egg and its yolk, for "thy outward and inward state." For the preceding phrase, *thou hast shown us the mark of thy arrow*, comp. Chenery's note on the proverb: "Each man knows best the mark of his arrow," vol. i., p. 323.

Now when I perceived the traces of the good and bad blended in Abû Zayd.—This is an approximate paraphrase of an idiom which defies all attempts at a more accurate translation. *Shaubu abî zaidin wa raubu-hu* is explained by the commentators as meaning the honey of Abû Zayd and his curdled milk, that is to say, his sweet and bitter, or his truth and falsehood. The proverb (Ar. Prov., ii. 647 and 878), *mâ 'inda-hu shaubun wa lâ raubun*, applies to a man of indifferent character, somewhat like the English, "he is neither fish nor fowl."

When, lo! it was he himself, in Arabic *fa-izâ huwa iyyâ-hu*, with the objective case of the repeated pronoun instead of the nominative, according to the grammarians of Basra a popular solecism for *fa-izâ huwa huwa*, as would be the English, "behold! he was him." Since Ḥarîri was a native of Basra, it is more than probable that he shared this view; nevertheless, he adopts the faulty phrase, partly because he aims at a vivid portraiture of life, partly for reasons discussed by Chenery in his "Introduction," vol. i., p. 72, where similar instances of such disputed grammatical points are mentioned.

Has wooers for her comeliness and pleasingness.—The literal rendering would be: "Is wooed as with the wooing of one who by her

beauty can dispense with adornments (*ghâniyah*), and by her pleasant ways so captivates her husband that he feels not tempted to look at others (*mughniyah*).

Then let him wash my grief with its proper soap.—This may be taken by Abû Zayd's audience to mean a gift that would allay his anxiety for the future of his pretended daughter, but for the initiated it contains an allusion to a saying attributed to Chosroes, that wine is the soap for grief, and implies that the reprobate intends to spend the prospective dirhems on the forbidden beverage, which is the real theme of his improvisation.

Making me send after him more than one glance of loving affection.—Here again a lengthy paraphrase is needed, in order to render the Arabic idiom intelligible. *Zawwada-nî naẓratan min zî 'alaqin* means literally: "provisioned me with the glance of one possessed of affection" (comp. Ar. Prov., ii. 747).

THE THIRTY-SIXTH ASSEMBLY.

The explanation of the twenty conundrums contained in this Assembly has been given at the foot of the translation from Ḥarîri's own commentary, and it remains for me here only to add a few more remarks of general interest, partly from the same short commentary appended to it by the author, partly from other sources, which I was able to consult.

I made my camel of peregrination kneel down at Malaṭîyah.—De Sacy spells the name Maltîyah, and I followed him in my own edition of the text, misled by his statement that the ancient name of the town was Maldanî, and had by the Arabs been transformed into Maltîyah, with or without *tashdîd* on the *yâ'*. Since then, however, I have ascertained that the town, situated in Mesopotamia on the western side of the Euphrates, was formerly called Maladnî. Moreover Fîrûzâbâdî, the author of the Kâmûs, rejects the form with *tashdîd* as faulty, hence it appears that the form Malaṭyah given in De Sacy's quotation from Mutenebbi is the only correct one, and that Ḥarîri has altered it into Malaṭîyah by poetical licence, to make it rhyme with *maṭîyah*, travelling-beast. The old city had been destroyed by the Greeks, and Kaliph Manṣûr rebuilt it A.H. 139, surrounded it with a wall, and settled in it a number of Arab tribes.

When I had thrown down there my staff, a proverbial expression for I had given over travelling or made a halt. In a similar manner, it is said, "I lifted up my staff," for "I set out on or resumed my journey" (Ar. Prov., ii. 644 ; ii. 493).

I saw a group of nine people who had purchased some wine.—The Arabic term for people is here *raht*, which means a company of men below ten in number, and who according to an observation of Ḥarîri in his *Durrah*, are sons of the same father from different mothers. If, however, the word is preceded by a numeral, as here by *tis'ah*, nine, it is synonymous with *nafs* or *shakhs*, a person, and in using it in this signification, Ḥarîri alludes to Koran xxvii. 49 : "And there were in the city nine persons, who committed excesses in the land, and did not that which is right." A few lines lower down the sons of one father and various mothers are called *abnâ'u 'illât*, *'illah* being a fellow-wife, from the root *'all* "drinking repeatedly," according to the idea that a man on marrying first took a single draught (*nahila*), which he repeats on wedding a second woman or more in addition. These half-brothers are further qualified as thrown together from deserts, from which it would appear that their case was similar to that of the fictitious son of Abû Zayd and Barrah in Assembly V., vol. i., p. 130, that is that all of them, or at least some, had a common father, who in his wanderings had married their respective mothers, and left them pregnant, without returning to them. On their chance meeting they may have discovered this tie of relationship between them, which in itself was loose enough, but strengthened by their common love for Arab lore, here called the woof of scholarship, and meaning an intimate knowledge of the Arabic language, oratory and poetry. The laxness of manners indicated by this supposed state of affairs would account for their buying wine, for the purpose of a drinking-bout in the open air, a proceeding which is evidently not approved of by Al Ḥârith, but which he is ready to condone for the sake of their accomplishments. I may mention that the term employed for wine is *qahwah*, the modern word for coffee, but in the older language used for any intoxicating liquor, and in particular as a synonym of *khamr*. It is said to be thus called because it blunts the sexual appetite (*tuqhî shahwata' l-jimâ'*).

And appeared as a complex compatible in its parts.—The simile is

either taken from grammatical terminology, in which it means a compound sentence whose constituent parts are well proportioned to each other, or it is, according to Sherîshi, a comparison borrowed from arithmetic, meaning a number whose parts are congruous, *i.e.*, one which can be divided into its fractions and fractions of fractions (half, third of this, fourth of the result, and so on) without leaving a rest, the smallest of which is 2,520, thus divisible by the first numbers from 2 to 10. The idea seems to be, that however deeply these people entered into the discussion of any question, it never led to a discrepancy of opinion between them.

We began to display both Soha and the Moon, i.e., things insignificant and brilliant (or obscure and evident; see the note on "*Sohayl and Soha meet*," vol. i., p. 489, and comp. Ar. Prov., i. 527, 528).

An old man intruded upon us.—The Arabic for "intruded" is here *waghala*, as in Assembly XXIV., vol. i., p. 244, since those intruded upon are engaged in drinking, in contradistinction from *warasha*, which would mean he joined uninvited a company taking their meal or celebrating a banquet; see also the note on *Tofayl*, vol. i., p. 411.

Whose comeliness and shapeliness had gone, while knowledge and experience remained with him.—The first clause of this proposition, in Arabic, *zahaba ḥibru-hu wa sibru-hu*, is borrowed from a tradition, and *ḥibr* is explained as the impression or trace of beauty, from *ḥabara*, he embellished, whence I translate comeliness, *i.e.*, pleasantness of aspect. *Sibr*, on the other hand, is that by which a thing is recognized, its form, or shape, and if I render it by shapeliness, I have in my mind the relation which exists in Italian between forma and formosità, or the more emphatic sense of the word in the English idiom "he is in good form." The Arabic equivalents for knowledge and experience, *khubr* and *sabr*, are synonyms for information obtained by testing and probing.

And that both he who drew water from the top of the well, and he who drew it from the bottom, were at a loss.—*Al mâtiḥ* is a man standing with his legs astride on the brink of a well, and receiving the bucket filled with water from another standing at the bottom, who is called *al-mâ'iḥ*, a practice which has given rise to the proverb: "Thou knowest this better than the *mâ'iḥ* knoweth the fundament of the *mâtiḥ*" (see Ar. Prov.,, i. 111).

Not every thing black is a date, nor every thing ruddy is wine.—The proverb, for which comp. Ar. Prov., ii. 627, runs originally: "Not every thing white is fat, nor every thing black a date," and is used to indicate an error in opinion or judgment, and difference of nature and disposition. Abû Zayd substitutes for the simile "fat" that of "wine," in allusion to the pastime in which the party were indulging and, I suppose, insinuating that he for one would not have any scruple to take a share in it.

Then we held on to him, as the chameleon holds to the trees.—One of their proverbs says: "More cautious than the chameleon," because it never leaves one branch of a tree before it has firmly seized another with its fore-feet (Ar. Prov., i. 399).

The cure of a rent is that it be stitched, a proverbial expression for the reparation of an injury, here referring to the stranger's sarcastic remark by which he had wounded the susceptibilities of the audience. The word *ḥaus*, stitching, means the sowing together of a torn garment, without using a patch (Ar. Prov., i. 7).

I shall give the judgment of Solomon in the matter of the sown field, meaning a sound judgment, such as was that of Solomon, alluded to in Koran, xxi. 78: "And David and Solomon, when they gave judgment concerning a field, when some people's sheep had grazed therein; and We were witnesses of their judgment." The story underlying this passage is thus told by Ibn 'Abbâs: "Two men came before David and Solomon, one of whom was owner of a field, the other of some sheep. The former said, O Prophet of the Lord, the sheep of this man have broken loose at night and pastured in my field, leaving nothing of its produce. Said David to him: Go, the sheep shall be thine. But Solomon, who was then eleven years old, quoth: Methinks another decision would be more equitable towards both parties. So David authorized him to deliver judgment between the twain, whereupon he said: I see fit that thou give over his sheep to the owner of the field, to whom their young, and their milk and wool and every profit derived therefrom shall belong, and that thou give over the field to the owner of the sheep, to sow therein seed, such as his sheep have pastured of, and keep it until in the coming year it have the same appearance as on the day on which it has been grazed upon, when he shall return it to its owner, and claim the return of his own sheep from him. Then David said to him: The

decision be as thou hast decided, and he issued judgment accordingly."

Golden-coloured cooled (*companionable*) *wine*, in Arabic *ash-shamûlu 'z-zahabîyah, shamûl* being a name for wine, either because it gathers the drinkers sociably together (*shamûla*), or more probably because it has been cooled by exposure to the north wind (*shimâl*, comp. the note on *Cooled of the north wind*, vol. i., p. 501), and here accompanied by the feminine of the adjective, because it is a synonym of the feminine noun *khamr*. It will be noticed how persistently the obtruder harps on a subject so congenial to him.

That those who failed may not doubt.—Al-mubṭilûna, a term applied in Koran, xxix. 47, to those who treat the sacred book as a vain thing, or accuse it of falsehood, has here the more general meaning of disparaging critics, who raise capricious and frivolous objections.

I am not like him who stints his boon-companion, nor of those whose fat remains in their own dish.—Who stints is in Arabic *man yasta'ṣiru*, lit., "who prefers himself to others." The second part of the sentence is an allusion to the proverb, *samnu-kum hurîqa fî adîmi-kum*, your fat (butter) has been poured out into your own dish, *i.e.*, serves only to render your own food savoury (*adîm*, a by-dish). *Adîm* is also synonymous with *niḳy*, an earthen pail or leather bag, used for buttering, when the meaning would be, your butter remains in your vessel, and is never taken out from it, to prepare food for guests of yours. In either case the proverb is applied to a person who keeps his good things to himself, without letting others benefit thereby. The quotation seems to reprove them for not having offered him a cup (see Ar. Prov., i. 614).

Then he blinked [*made sign with his glance*] *to the third and said.*—Allusion to Koran, xix. 12: "And he (Zacharias) came forth from the sanctuary to his people and made sign to them (as though he would say), 'Praise God at morn and eve.'" (The note to this passage in the second edition of De Sacy misprints ix. for xix.)

We are not of the steeds of this race-course, and have no hands for the untying of these knots.—Two proverbial expressions for: "We are not equal to this task" (see Ar. Prov., ii. 644, and ii. 493). Another form of the second of these sayings is, "No two hands belonging to one man are ten," meaning "The power of one man is not like that of ten;" in Arabic: *lâ yadai li-wâḥidin bi-'asharah*, where the

dual with its suppressed *nûn* before the dative particle *li* stands for the *iẓâfah* construction, *lâ yadaini wâhidin*, as the popular phrase *lâ abâ laka*, thou hast no father, stands for *la abâka*, there is no father of thine.

I shall make known to [*teach*] *you that which ye had not known.*—Allusion to Koran, ii. 146: "Thus have We sent to you an apostle from among yourselves, to rehearse our signs to you, and to purify you, and to instruct you in the book, and in wisdom, and to teach you that which ye had not known."

And the pockets (lit., *sleeves*) *became as if yesterday they had not been rich*, for "they became emptied of their money." This again alludes to the Koran, x. 25: "Until the earth hath received its golden raiment, and is decked out: and they who dwell on it deem that they have power over it! Our behest cometh to it by night or by day, and We make it as if it had been mown down—as if it had not been rich only yesterday."

THE THIRTY-SEVENTH ASSEMBLY.

I had travelled up to Ṣa'dah.—*Ṣa'dah*, without the article and imperfectly declined, is the name of a large town in Upper Yemen, about sixty parâsangs distant from Ṣan'â, and was renowned for the manufacture of a superior kind of leather, and for the beauty of its women, of which Ibn Batûtah gives a glowing account. The latter particular has furnished the name daughters of Ṣa'dah, which in the following line of the original is given to the Zebra or South African wild ass, as resembling the women of that place in beauty and graceful agility. If *sa'dah* takes the article, it signifies the shaft of a lance, which needs no *taṣqîf* or straightening, wherefore Al Ḥâriṣ, in allusion to a verse of the *Lâmîyet al 'Arab*, calls himself possessed of a straightness that resembles a lance (*yaḥkî 's-sa'data*).

Whom it contained of noble lords, in Arabic *man taḥwî-hu mina 's-sarâti*. *Sarât* stands here for *sara'at*, pl. of *sarîyun*, a lord or princely person, which, according to Jauharî, is the only singular in *fa'alah* of a word of the measure *fa'îl*. De Sacy reads *surât*, which is the plural of *sârî*, one who travels by night, and would here evidently be meaningless. This may be a slip of the pen, occasioned by the

preceding *ruwât*, pl. of *râwî*, or simply a misprint, for in his commentary he quotes the above-mentioned remark of Janharî, and in vol. i.; p. 56, of his second edition he reads correctly *sarât*. In Assembly XIII. Abû Zayd says: "I am of the Princes of the tribes" (vol. i., p. 177), *annî min sarawâti 'l-qabâ'il*, where *sarawât* is a further plural of the plural *sarât*.

Wide of range, namely, in the exercise of his liberality. *Bâ'*, like the English fathom in its original meaning, is the width between the extremities of the arms when extended, and *raḥîbu 'l-bâ'* or *ṭawîlu 'l-bâ'*, wide or long of range, is said of a generous man, as on the contrary a miser is called *qasîru 'l-bâ'*, short of range.

A Temîmî in descent and disposition, i.e., descended from Temîm bin Ad, whose progeny, the Benû Temîm, were celebrated for their generous disposition, inherited from him. Temîm was the maternal uncle of Nazr bin Kanânah, father of Ḳoraysh, through Barrah, the daughter of his sister Morr, whence the poet Jerîr says:

"The mother who bore Ḳoraysh disgraced not men nor was she barren,
For no son is nobler than Ḳoraysh, and no uncle nobler than Temîm."

And in a similar strain Farazdak sings in praise of the tribe Ḳoraysh:

"They are the sons of Barrah, daughter of Morr: how noble their kin on father and mother's side:
For no chief purer of descent than Ḳoraysh, no uncle nobler than Temîm."

Another poet, however, taxes the Benû Temîm with avarice and meanness, saying:

"Temîm is a surer guide on the road of vileness than the Ḳaṭa bird (comp. vol. i., p. 480),
But when they enter on the path of noble deeds, they go astray."

At the same time endearing myself to him by being chary of visiting, in accordance with Mohammed's saying, "Visit intermittingly that thou make thyself the more beloved."

Until I became the echo of his voice and the Salmân of his house.—The former simile is taken from the proverb, "quicker than the return of the echo" (Ar. Prov., i. 674), in the sense in which it is said of one who obeys readily: "he is quick as if he were the son of the mountain (*ibnu 't-ṭûd*)," meaning the echo (Ar. Prov., i. 163 and 184, where the expression "daughter of the mountain," *ibnatu 'l-jabal*, is

used). Salmân, the Persian, was an early convert to Islam, and an intimate associate of Mohammed, who considered him as a member of his household. It was he who after the battle of Ohud, when Medina was threatened with an invasion of the hostile tribes, advised Mohammed to entrench the town (see Muir's "Life of Mohamet," new edition, p. 318). Ibn 'Abbâs relates that the Prophet said of him: "The longing of Paradise for Salmân is not greater than Salmân's longing for Paradise." He died A.H. 36.

And inhaling the fragrance of his bay-tree, in Arabic *rand*, name of an odorous tree, the inhaling or sniffing of whose scent, like the preceding simile, stands for enjoying the Kadi's liberality.

And when I roast meat he casts it into the cinders, taken from the proverb: "Thy brother has been roasting meat, until when it was done he dropped it into the ashes," applied to one who spoils that which had been done well (Ar. Prov., i. 657). It is said to originate with the Khalif 'Omar, who uttered the words when, on passing the house of a man renowned for his piety, he heard the sounds of musical instruments and the noises of revelry.

And those around him were amazed at it—wa aṭrafa bi-hi man ḥawâlai-hi, the translation of which turns on the meaning given to the word *aṭrafa*. It may be paraphrased with the Beyrout edition, *atâ-hum bi 'l-uṭrûfati*, having the Kadi for subject, and rendered by Preston: "(He) represented it to those around as an extraordinary case." Or it may have for its subject "those around him," when it would signify "they became possessed of wonder (*ṣârû żawî ṭurfatin*) and said, 'How strange this is' (*mâ aṭrafa-hu*)." This is De Sacy's interpretation, and I follow it, as more in keeping with the Arabic idiom. Preston's remark: "The words which follow, viz., *summa qâla* (thereupon he said), without a repetition of the word *qâla*, seem to show that the first explanation is the true one," fails to be conclusive for two reasons. In the first instance he overlooks and ignores in his rendering the suffixed pronoun in *man ḥawâlai-hi*, which precedes the verb *qâla*, and may well supply the subject for it. Secondly, this verb being in the singular, could not by any possibility of Arabic construction refer to the plurality of persons surrounding the Kadi, unless it opened the sentence; we can say *qâla man ḥawâlai-hi*, but if the verb follows, it must be *man ḥawâlai-hi qâlû*? The singular of the verb, therefore, necessitates [illegible]

subject a noun in the singular, which in this place can only be *al-qâẓî*.

Disobedience is one bereavement of the twain, lit., one of the two bereavements, meaning that children, by their disobedience, are as much lost to their parents as by death, or in the words of a current proverb, *al-ʿuqûq ṣuklu man lam yaṣkal*, disobedience experienced from children is the bereavement of him who is not bereft (Ar. Prov., ii. 92).

Oftentimes barrenness is more cooling to the eye, viz., than children, which endearingly are called *qurratu 'l-ʿain*, coolness of the eye, but frequently become an eyesore by their disobedience and ingratitude. Preston translates: "And perhaps it would be preferable to be entirely childless," which he explains in the note: "And perhaps utter bereavement is cooler to the eye," *i.e.*, less painful [than that they should be disobedient]. This, however, seems somehow to miss the meaning of *ʿuqm*, which is sterility, not "utter bereavement."

Like one who craves for the eggs of the cock hawk—in Arabic, *ka-man yabghî baiẓa 'l-anûqi*, a proverbial expression for that which is difficult or impossible to obtain. In the explanation of the simile the commentators differ. Some say that *anûq* is a male hawk, otherwise called *rakham*, from whom it would be absurd to look for eggs. According to others, it is the female bird, and her eggs are said to be unobtainable, because she builds her nest on inaccessible mountain-peaks. The latter interpretation is evidently the correct one in the following line of the poet Akhṭal:

> "To seek from the dark-eyed gazelles their intimacy
> Is like seeking the eggs of the hawk ensconced in her nest,"

for the feminine adjective *mustakinnah* shows that the female bird is meant. (*Gazelles*, metaphorically for damsels, is the signification ascribed here to *jâzi'ât*, which originally means camels, or similar animals, that are satisfied with the moisture contained in green food instead of water, therefore leading to the idea of abstemious, chaste, coy. The word rendered by intimacy is *sirr*, literally secret, but here standing for sexual intercourse, connexion, marriage, as in ch. xi., v. 235, of the Koran: "And no blame shall attach to you in proposing to such women [within the first four months and ten days of their widowhood], or in keeping the intention of doing so to yourselves. God knoweth that ye will not forget them. But

pledge not each other to marriage unless ye speak honourable words." Rodwell translates: "But plight not faith to them in secret," apparently mistaking the special meaning of the word in this case, for there is no need for the injunction of avoiding secrecy, provided the wooing is done in decent language). To return to the idiom in question, the female hawk seems also to be alluded to in a passage taken from an anonymous poet:

"When I had a secret entrusted to me, I concealed it like the eggs of the hawk *whose nest is not to be reached.*"

In Arabic, *lâ yunâlu la-hu wakru*, where the pronoun in *la-hu* (whose) refers to the collective noun *baiẓ*, not to the name of the bird, since the secret concealed in the breast is compared to the eggs deposited in the nest. Both these instances tally with the proverb (Ar. Prov., ii. 148), *a'azzu min baiẓi 'l-anûqi*, rarer than the eggs of the hawk, for *'azîz*, of which *a'azz* is the comparative, does not imply absolute impossibility, but difficulty of attainment and rareness of occurrence, being, for instance, applied to exceptional or unique grammatical forms, as the plural *sarât* mentioned p. 224 above. On the other hand, it is stated that Mu'âwiyeh was asked by a man: "Wilt thou grant me a loan?" He answered "Yes." Said the man: "And to my son?" "No," answered the Khalif. "Or to my kindred?" insisted the supplicant. Whereupon Mu'âwiyeh said:

"He wanted the piebald, big with young (*ṭalaba 'l-ablaqa 'l-'aqûq*),
When he could not find him, he wished for the eggs of the hawk,"

where *ablaq* means a male piebald horse or spotted camel, for whom it is as impossible to conceive as it is for the male hawk to lay eggs, and consequently the latter phrase here coincides with the popular expression, "the egg of the cock." Some, however, will have it that the cock lays an egg once without repeating the performance, in support whereof they quote the following verse of the poet Abû 'Atâhîyah:

"Thou hast visited us once in a lifetime, do so again and let it not be the cock's egg,"

i.e., let not thy visit remain solitary like it.

As with a frown the lion would fend his mane.—This alludes to the proverb: "More unapproachable than the mane of the lion" (see Ar. Prov., ii. 714). In the text the dual *libdatai-hi* is used, the reason for which seems to be that the word *libdah* (mane) is defined in the dictionaries as the matted hair between the shoulders and on the croup of the lion.

As those endowed with firmness bore patiently, in Arabic *ṣabra ûlî 'l-'azmi*, a Koranic expression taken from ch. xlvi., v. 34: "Bear thou up, then, with patience, as did the Apostles, endued with firmness."

Spill not the water of thy face, in Arabic *lâ turîq mâ'a 'l-muhaiyâ*, for the more usual *mâ'a 'l-wajhi*, in which the word "water" is used in a similar sense as when we speak of the water of a gem or a blade, meaning the smooth surface and serene aspect of the human countenance, characterising a man who is respected and respects himself. Thus "the water of the face," like the Persian equivalent, *âbi rûy*, stands for honour, and to spill it is a metaphorical expression for "demeaning one's self."

And if his broidered satin (dîbâj) has gone to rags, sees not his way by begging to fret his cheeks.—Dîbâj, derived through Persian probably from the Greek, is brocade or embroidered silk-stuff, and the feminine form *dibâjah* becomes a simile for the forehead and the cheeks, where again the idea of glossiness and smoothness constitutes the link of comparison. The fraying or fretting of the tissue of the face, by rubbing it on the ground in supplication, is an idiom of the same meaning as that explained in the preceding note, with both of which compare Chenery in the passage, *Fray the tissue of my countenance*, vol. i., p. 280. In addition to the extracts in prose and verse on the shame and humiliation of beggary given there, the following may be quoted. Al-Ḥasan, son of 'Alî, said on this subject: "Let it suffice thee, as to begging, that it enfeebles the tongue of the speaker, and breaks the heart of the brave, the valiant, that it makes stand the freeborn, the noble, in the place of the abject slave, that it takes away the freshness of colour and wipes away a man's honour, that it makes him love death and renders life hateful." Al-Asma'î relates: "I heard an Arab saying: 'Begging is the high-road to abasement; it robs the noble of his greatness and the estimable of the esteem in which he is held." Mu'âwiyeh is said to

have presented 'Abd Allah ibn az Zobayr with 3,000 dirhems for having recited to him a triplet of Afwah al-Awadî running thus:

"I have tested mankind generation after generation, and seen naught but deceit and strife,
Nor have I witnessed of calamities one more disastrous and hurtful than enmity between man and man,
And I have tasted the bitterness of all things, but there is naught that excels begging in bitterness."

Wilt thou teach thy mother how to copulate, and thy nurse how to give suck?—Alluding to and enlarging upon the proverb "like one who instructs her mother in copulation" (Ar. Prov., ii. 325), said of a person who affects to teach another more knowing than himself. In similar manner the popular sayings: "*The scorpion has rubbed himself against the snake*, and *the weanlings have coursed along with the stallions*," apply to one who attempts a task to which he is not equal (comp. Ar. Prov., i. 609).

And lowered to him the wing of the kindly, an expression borrowed from Koran, xvii. 25: "And lower to them (your parents) the wing of humility out of compassionate tenderness and say, 'Lord have mercy on them both, even as they reared me when I was little.'"

As for those in need, an exception is made for them in matters prohibited.—This refers to the popular saying *az-zarûrâtu tabîḥu 'l-maḥzûrâta*, "necessities permit things forbidden," which is akin to our proverb "necessity knows no law," and, according to Sherîshi, is justified by Koran, v. 5: "Whoso then without wilful leanings to wrong shall be forced by hunger to transgress, to him, verily, will Allah be Indulgent, Merciful.

Was it not thou who contradicted his father irreverently in saying?—This translation presupposes the reading *wa qâla*, which is that of the native editions and of most MSS., my own included, assigning the following verses to the youth, whom his father quotes, as the son had done with the preceding verses belonging to the old man. De Sacy reads *iz qâla*, "when he said," making the father to be their author also, and thereby to contradict himself by blaming contentment and resignation which he had praised and commended before. The editors of De Sacy's second edition, in remarking that the former reading supports Rückert's opinion on the point to the same effect, add with good reason, that only in this manner the Kadi's

indignation at the lad's inconsistency becomes intelligible, who first refused to beg at his father's injunction and now deems an appeal to the generous preferable to bearing distress patiently.

For Moses met it heretofore and al-Khaẓir did the same.—Al-Khaẓir, more commonly called al-Khiẓr, is the servant of God and companion of Moses, mentioned in the Sûra of the Cave, xviii., verse 76 of which relates the incident here alluded to: "Then went they on until they came to the people of a city. Of its people they asked food, but they refused them for guests." The Mohammedans consider him to be one of the Prophets, who has survived from the time of Moses to the present age, and a legend says that he is present whenever his name has been pronounced, whence the following line of the poet Abû ṭ-Ṭaiyib:

"As soon as we recall his liberality, he appears, far or near he hastens to the spot with the foot of al-Khizr."

Temîmî at one time and Kaisî at another?—In the original Temîmî and Kaisî stand in the accusative or objective case, which is either that of condition (*ḥâl*), or depending on an elided verb: "Showest thou thyself at one time as a Temîmî, at another as a Kaisî, *i.e.*, displayest thou alternately the lofty disposition of the tribe Temîm and the baseness of the tribe Kais? The form of interrogation has here the force of an assertion, implying reproof. To Temîmî compare the note, p. 225, above.

"*By Him who has made thee a key for the truth, and an opener* (*fattâḥ*) *amongst mankind*, meaning a dispenser of justice amongst them, as in Koran, vii. 87: "O our Lord! decide (lit., open) between us and between our people with truth, for Thou art the best of those who decide," where the participle *fâtiḥ*, lit., one who opens, coincides with the more intensive form *fattâḥ* of the present passage.

For among the missing arrows is one that hits, meaning that even a miser may have a fit of generosity (see Ar. Prov., ii. 625).

So he was not slow (lit., *he belied him not*) *to set his net and to bake his fish before the fire.*—These are two proverbial expressions, according to a marginal note in "Myths of Modern Origin," for using stratagem or planning deceit, the former self-evident, the latter arising from the practice of a thief, who on seeing a fire, walked up to it

with the purpose of stealing, but when surprised, pretended he had come to bake his fish by it.

Are rooted more firmly than mount Razwá.—This is the name of a mountain near Medina with far-spreading ramifications, which explains the comparison here made between its extent and that of the Kadi's wisdom and clemency.

Whose gifts are like yon quails and yon manna, allusion to Koran, ii. 54: "And We caused the clouds to overshadow you, and We sent down manna and quails upon you" (comp. also vii. 160 and xx. 82).

Then the youth repented bitterly.—The Arabic for this: *fa-suqiṭa 'l-fatá fí yadi-hi,* contains a peculiarity of idiom, which has greatly exercised the ingenuity of the philologists. *Suqúṭ,* to fall, is a neuter verb of which the passive can only be used in the third person singular *suqiṭa,* with the impersonal meaning "it was fallen," and the proverbial expression *suqiṭa fí yadi-hi* (Ar. Prov., i. 604), which is applied to one deeply repentant, signifies, a falling into his hand was caused, namely, of his head or mouth, brought about by his remorse, since people in a paroxysm of contrition were wont to bite their fingers. A note in De Sacy's second edition points out, that grammatically speaking the phrase is very similar to the Latin "Sic itur ad astra," literally, "thus a going or soaring to the stars is done," for: this is the road to fame. The Arabic mode of speech seems to have been unknown to the poets of the pre-Islamite period, but appears for the first time in the Koran, vii. 148, where it is said of the worshippers of the golden calf *wa-lammá suqiṭa fí aidí-him,* translated by Rodwell: "But when they bitterly repented." Mohammed, no doubt, had heard the locution on his journeys amongst the desert Arabs, but when the later poets adopted it from the sacred book, they inadvertently or intentionally overlooked the impersonality of the passive form, and Abú Nuwás, for instance, was not afraid to say: *wa niswatin suqiṭtu minhá fí yadí.* This is about the same as if a facetious Latinist of the middle ages had, in the sentence quoted above, added the termination of the first person to the verbal form itur, and written: sic ituro ad astra. Intelligent readers would have understood him to mean: "Thus I do what is done to reach the stars or the pinnacle of glory," just as the fellow-countrymen of Abú Nuwás perceived his meaning to be: "And there is many a wóman by whom I was made sorely to repent." In the present case the

construction could have been rendered perfectly correct in two ways by saying either: *fa iẓâ 'l-fatâ suqiṭa fî yadi-hi* or *fa suqiṭa fî yadi 'l-fatâ*, the former signifying "Then, as for the youth, it was fallen into his hand," the latter meaning, "Then it was fallen into the hand of the youth," where the expression "it was fallen" is to be explained as has been done in the beginning of this note. Now it may be asked, why did Ḥarîri, who possessed such a thorough mastery over his language, choose the more objectionable form when he knew better? My answer is, that it is not he who speaks in his work, but the Râwî, who relates Abû Zayd's adventures, and Ḥarîri shows his skill in making him speak in the most natural and life-like manner. Al Ḥârith, who may be supposed to be an Arab of liberal education, above all well versed in his Koran and the poetry of his age, had begun with the proverbial and sacred formula *fa suqiṭa*, but remembering that the pronoun in *yadi-hi* would be without a subject to refer to, as the person mentioned last, was the Kadi, he throws in at once, by way of parenthesis, the word *al-fatá*, "as for the youth," without waiting for the end of the sentence. We have seen on various occasions that Ḥarîri likes to introduce such disputed points of grammar and etymology, partly to show that he is well acquainted with the controversy, partly perhaps to provoke further discussion on the subject. Finally I may add, for the sake of completeness, that one solitary reading of the Koran substitutes the active *saqaṭa* for the passive *suqiṭa*, supplying the noun *al-nadamu*, "repentance," as subject to the former, which interpretation, however, Ḥarîri himself in his grammatical treatise "Durrat al-Ghawwâṣ" declares to be faulty; a sufficient reply to those who would make the same substitution in the text of the Assembly.

And (might) learn from what tree his fire sprang, lit., might know the tree of his fire, for "his origin and character," alluding to the proverb (Ar. Prov., ii. 207, 256): "In every tree is fire, but the Markh and the 'Ufâr excel," viz., in yielding fire when rubbed, or feeding it, when kindled; so much so that in the hot season frequently trees of these kinds are set aflame by the friction, brought about by the wind, and spread conflagration over a whole valley. A poet of the Ḥamâseh says:

"Thy fire-shafts are the best of fire-shafts of kings in which the Markh-wood mixes with the 'Ufâr.

But even wert thou in the darkness of night to rub a pebble with the wood of the Naba' tree, thou wouldst elicit fire."

The Naba' is a tree whose wood, on account of its hardness, is preferred for making bows, so that the production of a spark by rubbing it against a pebble is a striking simile for any marvellous and extraordinary feat.

To inquire after his good and evil hap, in Arabic *li-asta'rifa sâniḥa-hu wa bâriḥa-hu*. This is taken from the flight of a bird, or from game, which are called *sânih*, if coming from the left and turning their right to you, which is considered by most Arabs to portend good, while *bâriḥ* means the reverse, and is said to augur evil. According to Sherîshi, however, the people of Nejd regard, on the contrary, the former as an ominous, the latter as an auspicious sign.

THE THIRTY-EIGHTH ASSEMBLY.

Ever since . . . . my pen sputtered.—The most obvious explanation of this phrase is that it means: Since I knew how to write, but the word *qalam*, pen, is also used metaphorically for *zakar*, membrum virile, when the idiom allows of the interpretation, "since I had reached puberty."

I clutched his stirrup with both my hands, in allusion to the proverb, *ushdud yadaika fî gharzi-hi*, tighten thy hands on his stirrup, meaning, cling to one who has the power to benefit thee, or stick to an undertaking unflaggingly (see Ar. Prov., i. 660).

In applying the pitch to the places where the scab begins to show, again proverbial (Ar. Prov., iii., P. 1, p. 541), for being well grounded in a matter, and knowing how to treat or mend it.

Swifter than the moon in her changes, the last word being in Arabic *nuqal*, plural of *nuqlah*, her movement from one sign of the Zodiac to the next, which is performed in about two days and eight hours. Another reading is *fî 'l-nufal*, during her second three nights (the first three being called *ghurar*), when her swiftness means her earliness of setting during those nights. The preceding expression, *to wander abroad faster than the proverb*, refers to the phrase *al-maṣalu 'l-sâ'ir*, the current proverb.

Which is part of man's chastisement (or torment), allusion to a tradi-

tion which is recorded, in the following words, in the Muwaṭṭâ, one of the oldest collections of the Ḥadîṯ, compiled by the Imâm Mâlik (†A.H., 179): "Travel is a portion of man's punishment, it deprives you of sleep and drink and food; so when one of you has obtained his object in undertaking it, let him return to his people in all haste."

So at a time when I had strayed to Merv, and no wonder.—Merv, in Arabic *Marw*, an imperfectly declined noun, whence the oblique case *Marwa*, is a large and celebrated town of Khorasan, called the mother of that country. As the people of Khorasan were renowned for their stinginess, it is not surprising that the inhabitants of the mother-town were said to excel in it all the rest of the world. Witness the story, related in Sadî's Gulistân, if I remember well, of the merchant of Merv, who would not allow his son to eat cheese, but made him rub his bread against the glass cover under which it was kept. In the title of this Assembly, Ḥarîri uses the regular form of the noun of relation *marwî*, in preference to the more usual *marwazî*, probably for *marghazî*, derived from *'marghaz*, an older name of Merv (compare my Persian Dictionary, p. 1217). The words in the text, *no wonder*, in Arabic *la gharwa*, are, of course, thrown in to rhyme with *marwa*, but they are not entirely irrelevant, as the fame and importance of the city may naturally enough induce a traveller to visit it.

Nor saw I any trace or dust of him, in the original *lâ arâ la-hu aṯar-an wa lâ 'iṯyar-an*, which final word means dust raised by his foot in walking, and seems more appropriate than the reading *'aiṯar-an* of some MSS., the meaning of which, "a slight and feeble trace," would appear pleonastic after *aṯar-an*.

And clings to the people commanding respect, as one clings to his wife and his close relations.—The text of this passage, *wa 'ltazama li-ahli 'l-ḥurami ka-mâ yultazamu li 'l-ahli wa'l-ḥurami*, contains a play on the double meaning of the words *ahl* and *ḥuram*. The latter is the plural of *ḥurmah*, which may be synonymous with *iḥtirâm*, honouring, paying respect, revering, and if in connection with it, *ahl* is taken in the sense of people, the expression *ahlu'l-ḥuram* signifies "people of respects," *i.e.*, to whom respects are due. But the plural of *ḥurmah* has also the special meaning of close relatives, comprising the relations of a man by consanguinity, affinity, or fosterage,

with whom marriage is unlawful, while *al-ahl*, with the article, stands for his household or more in particular for his wife. The reading which I have adopted is that of my own MS. and of the native editions. De Sacy has *al-ḥaram* for the second *al-ḥuram*, but the former, in the sense of "harem," would be almost identical with *al-ahl*, as his own definition in his commentary shows.

For Allah's grace upon thee has been great—quotation from Koran, iv. 113: "And God hath caused the Book and the Wisdom to descend upon thee, and what thou knewest not He hath caused thee to know; and the grace of God towards thee hath been great."

Who grovels in the dust after he had rolled in riches, in Arabic *tariba ba'da 'l-itrâbi*. The verb *tariba* means he has become poor, as though he were bent to the dust (*turâb*) by dint of his poverty, and *itrâb*, infinitive of the fourth form of the same verb, signifies being wealthy, as though a man's riches were plentiful, like dust.

And hopefulness is the best means of propitiation of him who begs, and the best gift of him who gives.—The commentators say in explanation of this: "The trusting hopefulness with which you represent your need to the generous on approaching him, gains his favour for you more effectually than the intercession of a third person, and it is a source of even greater pleasure and gratification to him than the gift itself, which he may be prevailed upon to bestow on you."

And deal me fair as Allâh has dealt fair with thee.—Taken from Koran, xxviii. 77: "But seek, by means of what God hath given thee, to attain the future Mansion; and neglect not thy part in this world, but be bounteous to others; as God has been bounteous to thee."

Then he stopped short, to wait for the fruit of his planting (*ukla gharsihi*).—*Ukl*, lit., that which is eaten, occurs in the sense of fruit, Koran, xviii. 31: "Now set forth to them as a parable two men; on one of whom We had bestowed two gardens of grape-vines, and surrounded both with palm-trees, and placed corn-fields between them; Each of the gardens did yield its fruit (*ukl*), and failed not thereof at all."

Mayst thou forfend a curse, i.e., mayst thou guard thyself or refrain from doing anything that would bring a curse upon thee, a formula of greeting, implying a prayer, addressed to kings in the times of the Ignorance. Jauharî quotes the following verse, which he attri-

butes to Zohayr bin Janab al-Kalbî, a warrior poet, on whom see Caussin de Perceval's "Essai," i. 116; ii. 174:

"For sooth, I have obtained all that man may obtain, except the salute,"

where the word "salute," in Arabic *at-taḥaiyah*, is explained by *al-mulk*, *i.e.*, royal power and dignity.

And when he began with a bounty, follows it up with another; in the text, *wa in bada' bi-'â'idat-in 'âda.* The verb *'aud* means to come back, to return, to repeat. Hence the feminine participle *'â'idah*, that which returns, stands like the English word "return" for profit, advantage, gain, which, when conferred upon somebody else, becomes a benefit. *'Âda* has then its usual sense: he comes back to it, repeats it again and again.

And never meet stinginess and praise, so that one would think a lizard this, that a fish, etc.—An Arab proverb says, "I shall never do this until the lizard goes to the water" (Ar. Prov., i. 574), and of two things or persons utterly incompatible with each other it is said "they are as far asunder as the lizard and the fish," because the former avoids that which is the element of the latter (comp. vol. i., p. 431).

Made him alight on the seat of the circumciser (*maq'adu 'l-khâtini*), a popular expression for closest proximity, *as mazjaru 'l-kalb*, the place to which a frightened dog is driven, stands for a great distance. Synonymous with the former idiom are *maq'adu 'l-qâbilati* and *maq'adu 'l-izâri*, seat of the midwife, place of the waistband, respectively, and a more emphatic form of expressing remoteness is *manâṭu 'l-'uyûq* (*ṣ-ṣuraiyâ*), the suspension place of Capella (of the Pleiades).

That which announced to him length of skirt and shortness of night.—Length of skirt is a metaphor for wealth and luxury, for which compare the following passage in the twenty-sixth Assembly, vol. i., p. 264: "Until when his gifts had overwhelmed me, *and his gold had lengthened my skirt*, I contrived to depart in the fair condition thou seest." In similar manner, shortness of night means a life of pleasure, since the night is short only for him who passes it in delight and enjoyment, while, as the poet says, the shortest night becomes long in sorrow and grief. Many conceits of the poets turn

on this subject, amongst others the following play of Abû 'l-Kâsim as-Sâlimî on the consonance of sound between *lailî*, my night, and *lailá*, name of a mistress:

"My night and Lailá are alike in contrariness, making of me a proverb in love-matters,
My night is lavish of its length (*ṭûl*) whenever Lailá stints me her favour (*ṭaul*), and when she is lavish thereof it is my night that stints me."

That my earnings are due to worth, not to meddling, and my station to power of speech, not to kings' grace.—To this the commentators quote Mutenebbî's line:

"Not through my people have I attained to greatness, they are great through me,
By my own self have I risen, not by my ancestors."

THE THIRTY-NINTH ASSEMBLY.

On backs of Mahrî camels.—Mahrî is the noun of relation formed from Mahrat ibn Haydân, chief of a tribe of Yemen, and its feminine Mahrîyah means a camel descended from those bred by him, which were celebrated for their swiftness, said to surpass that of horses.

Some promising business had cropped up for me at Ṣuḥâr.—This is one of the chief towns of the district 'Omân, on the south-eastern coast of Arabia, and an emporium for the trade of the country by means of the Persian Gulf, with a harbour one parasang square. The above passage runs in Arabic, *wa qad sanaḥa lî arabun bi-Ṣuḥâra*, where I translate *arabun*, an affair or matter, by "promising business," on account of the verb *sanaḥa*, which, as was mentioned in a previous note, means: presented itself under favourable auspices.

Who blames himself and finds excuses, i.e., who reproaches himself for venturing on a sea-voyage and exposing himself to its dangers, but at the same time finds excuses, on account of the quantity of his merchandise, which would render the land journey too tedious and expensive.

O ye people of this strong-built ship, etc.—Allusion to the following passages of the Koran, xvii. 68: "It is your Lord, who speedeth

onwards the ships for you in the sea"; vi. 96: "This is the Ordinance of the Mighty, the Wise"; lxi. 10: "O ye who believe! shall I direct you unto a merchandise which shall deliver you from the sore torment?"

Whose shadow is not heavy, for: who is no encumbrance, or will not prove a bore, taken from the saying: thy shadow weighs heavy upon me (comp. Assembly XXII., vol. i., p. 230, l. 13; and the note on *Deemed his shadow to be heavy*, *ibid.*, p. 473).

And not to be stingy in providing for his needs.—The word *mâ'ûn*, here translated "in providing for his needs," has occurred in Assembly XXXVI., p. 80, l. 4 from the bottom, where I have rendered it by "bounty." It is, according to most lexicographers, a derivative of the measure *fâ'ul*, from the verb *ma'n*, to flow, whence it signifies rain, and in accordance with the connection existing in the Arabic mind between the idea of water and moisture and that of bounty, of which Chenery speaks in his interesting note on *A bucket from his stream* (vol. i., p. 282), it becomes synonymous with *ma'rûf*, in the sense of kindness, beneficence, etc. A more far-fetched explanation is, that it stands for *ma'ûnah*, aid, assistance, from the verb *'aun*, to help, and that the letter of prolongation in the first syllable is inserted to compensate for the dropped termination of the feminine. Be that as it may, the term *mâ'ûn* is further applied to anything useful, or borrowed for use, as a kettle, an axe, or household utensils in general. Abû 'Obaydeh says, *mâ'ûn* has in the time of Ignorance the meaning of advantage, gift, and in Islâm that of obedience, piety, legal alms. In modern Arabic, *mâ'ûnu 'l-waráq* is a ream of paper.

I take refuge with Allah from the paths of destruction.—An ejaculatory prayer of this kind, on embarking in a vessel, is approved of by Mohammed in the following words of a tradition: "It is a safeguard from drowning for my people when they mount their ships."

Allah . . . has not made it binding on the ignorant to learn, any more than He has made it incumbent on the learned to teach, i.e., He has enjoined the one at the same time, or as well as the other. This alludes to the saying attributed to 'Alî: "Allah has imposed upon the ignorant the duty of learning, as he has imposed upon those possessed of knowledge the duty of teaching." Similarly Mohammed bin Ka'b says: "It is not allowed to one of the learned to be silent concerning his learning, nor is the ignorant allowed to keep silence

concerning his ignorance, but he should ask." The equivalent for "He has made binding upon" is in Arabic *akhaza*, "he has taken from," where the word *'ahd* or *mîṡâq*, "covenant," is understood, which idiom occurs in full, Koran, iii. 184: "Moreover, when God entered into a covenant with (lit., took a covenant) from those to whom the Book had been given, . . . they cast it behind their backs and sold it for a sorry price! But vile is that for which they have sold it."

He quoted from the Koran, saying, lit., he read, *qara'a*, the verb from which the name Qu'rân or Koran itself is derived. The passage quoted is xi. 43.

By Him who holds in bondage the fathomless sea (*al-bahra 'l-lujjîya*). —*Lujjî*, derived from *lujjah*, an abyss, is that of which the bottom cannot be reached, and applies likewise to the sea in Koran, xxiv. 40: "Or like the darkness on the unfathomable sea, when covered by billows riding upon billows, above which are clouds: darkness upon darkness. When a man reacheth forth his hand, he can scarcely see it! He to whom God shall not give light, no light at all hath he!"

How could the son of brightness (*ibnu jalâ*) *remain hidden?*—a designation given to a man of fame or mark, either because it is used as a metaphor for the morning, the moon, or the dawn of day, or after a notorious depredator, thus called, for whom see Ar. Prov., i. 46.

While the sea was calm (*wa 'l-bahru rahwun*), again taken from Koran, xliv. 23: "And leave the sea behind thee resting in calmness," *i.e.*, restored to its natural condition, after it had swallowed the Egyptians in pursuit of Moses and his people. Rodwell translates here "the disparted sea," following the interpretation of those commentators who explain the word by opened or split asunder, from *rahâ*, he opened his legs wide. It is, however, evident, from our text, that Ḥarîri leans to the former notion.

And the travellers forgot all that had been, i.e., the state of things which had prevailed in the early part of their voyage.

But we proceeded to search within its inmost part, etc.—Allusion to the following passages of the Koran, xvii. 5: "So when the menace for the first crime (the slaughter of Isaiah and the imprisonment of Jeremiah, punished by the invasion of the Assyrians) came to be inflicted, We sent against you our servants, endued with terrible

prowess; and *they searched the inmost part* of your abodes, and the menace was accomplished"; *ibid.*, xvi. 50: "Have they not seen how everything which God hath created *turneth its shadow* right and left," where the verb *tafaiyu'* is used in the sense of turning one's shadow, which in the text of the Assembly has the meaning of seeking shade; *ibid.*, xxii. 44: "And how many cities which had acted wickedly have We destroyed, and they are laid low in ruin on their own foundations, and wells abandoned and *lofty castles.*"

We found every one of them in the predicament (lit., *skin*) *of one broken down, and the grief of one taken captive.*—This is the reading of De Sacy and my MS., which I follow in my own edition. The Beyrout and Boulak prints have instead: But we found every one of them sorrowful, deep in grief, so that we fancied him utterly broken down or taken captive.

When we saw that their fire was the fire of al-Ḥubâḥib. — This refers to the proverb, *akhlafu min nâri 'l-ḥubâḥib*, more deceitful than the fire of *al-Ḥubâḥib* or of *Abû Ḥubâḥib* (Ar. Prov., i. 454; ii. 343; iii., P. 1, 28), said to have been a miser, who used to kindle his fire from thin wood, so that it was extinguished before any guest, speculating on his hospitality, could approach it. According to others, the appellative applies to the glow-worm, commonly called *sirâju 'l-lail*, lamp of the night, or to the sparks struck by the hoofs of a horse on stony ground, or produced by the collision of stones in the air. Al-Kaṭâmî says in the Ḥamâseh:

"For sooth, the fires of Kays in winter-time are to the night farer but like the fire of al-Ḥubâḥib,"

which Tabrîzî explains: "Like the sparks springing from a stone under the horse's hoof."

And be the churl cursed (*qabuḥa*), the Arabic verb being taken in the sense in which it is used in Koran, xxviii. 42: "We pursued them with a curse in this world, and they shall be of the execrated (*mina 'l-maqbûḥîna*) on the day of Resurrection."

The Shâh of this territory.—The Persian word *shâh*, king, lends local colour to a scene enacted on an island of the Persian Gulf, and at the same time it contains an allusion to the king of chess, in connection with *ruq'ah*, territory, which also means a square of the chess-board.

When it took no longer than to say: Nay, nay!—For this proverbial phrase to express shortness of time and quickness of action see Ar. Prov., ii. 295. It occurs in the following line of Al Komayt ibn Zayd, of whom an account is given by Chenery, vol. i., p. 320:

"The alighting of the people therein is like (saying) nay, nay, for a little while, without putting saddle near saddle,"

i.e., without unsaddling. Jerîr uses in the same sense the expression *like nay and like this*, in speaking of a short snatch of sleep.

Or an enemy frankly hostile, in Arabic *wa 'adûwin mubînin*, allusion to Koran, xvii. 55: "Enjoin My servants to speak in kindly sort: Verily Satan would stir up strifes among them; aye, Satan is man's *avowed foe*."

Sound advisers how often are they suspected, lit., how many a sound adviser is set down as one to be suspected (*ẓannîn*), a word borrowed from Koran, lxxxi. 24, where, however, the reading *ẓannîn*, niggard, seems preferable. The Koranic passage refers to Mohammed, of whom it is said that he does not stint or keep back heaven's secrets. With the reading *ẓannîn* the meaning would be, he is not subject to the suspicion of falsehood, when he speaks of the invisible world and its mysteries.

That the hand of none menstruous must touch it, indicating that the spell is something sacred, in allusion to a woman in this state being forbidden to touch the sacred book.

Or the interval which the milker observes in drawing milk.—To one who hurries another on, it is said *amhilnî fuwâqa nâqatin*, allow me the collecting time (*fuwâq*) of a she-camel, *i.e.*, the time in which she collects a fresh flow of milk, after being milked (Ar. Prov., ii. 602).

So that I was made to fancy him Uwais al Karanî or Dobays al-Asadî.—The former, a native of Karan in Nejd, was the most eminent ascetic and devotee of Kûfa, who was killed in the battle of Ṣiffîn; Dobays, known as Amîr Dobays, or Amîr Saif ad-daulat al-Asadî, a grandee of Bagdad and contemporary of Ḥarîri, noted for his generosity, of which he gave signal proofs to the author of the Makâmât on hearing that he had mentioned him in this work.

THE FORTIETH ASSEMBLY.

But I met from her with the sweat of the water-bag, i.e., with the sweat which the carrying of the water-bag produces in the slave-girl who is burdened with it, a proverbial expression for misery and hardship, for which see Ar. Prov., ii. 347; iii., P. 2, 480. Another explanation is that the sweat of the water-bag means the water which flows from it or the flow itself, so that the meaning of the proverb, "I have imposed upon thee the sweat of the water-bag," would be either, I have forced thee to travel, when thou needest the sweat of the water-bag, *i.e.*, its water, or, I have imposed upon thee a task which makes thy sweat flow as profusely as the water flows from the water-bag. This would come near the form of the saying, transmitted by Maydâni (Ar. Prov., ii. 436): "I have met therefrom with the sweat of my brow." Lastly, some interpreters read, instead of *'araq* (sweat), the word *'alaq*, synonymous with *mi'lâq*, the handle by which the water-bag is carried, and say the proverb signifies: "I have imposed upon thee the carrying of the water-bag," namely, the necessity of travelling.

What the upshot would be, lit., how the turning-out would be (*kaifa 'l-munqalabu*).—The word *munqalab* may be noun of place (turning-point), or verbal noun (the turning-out of a matter). In the Koran, xviii. 34, it occurs in the sense of that which takes the turn of something else: "I shall surely find a better (garden) than it *in exchange* (*munqalaban*)"; and *ib.*, xxvi. 228, it has the meaning of return: "But they who treat them (the believers) unjustly shall find out what *a return* awaiteth them, lit., with what return they shall return (to God, *aiya munqalabin yanqalibûna*).

Hence I threw my business behind my back, in the Arabic idiom "behind my ear," to which Ḥarîri, in the short commentary attached by him to this Assembly, quotes Koran, iii. 184: "They cast it behind their backs" (comp. p. 216, above).

Though I should not be of any help.—The fourth form of the verb *ghaná*, which generally means to enrich, is here used in that of helping, as in Koran, xliv. 41: "A day when a servant shall not help a master in aught (*lâ yughnî*), neither shall aid be given to them (*lâ yunṣarûna*)."

And stint even the fragment of a worn toothpick, lit., *the spittings of the siwâk*, meaning the splinters of the *miswâk*, or piece of wood, used for rubbing and thereby cleaning the teeth before prayer, which remain in the mouth, and are spit out, when this preliminary act of ceremonial ablution has been performed (see Hughes' "Dictionary of Islâm," p. 353).

Knowest thou not that contumacy provokes the wrath of the Lord?—The Lord may mean "thy husband," as the Beyrout edition explains, or more probably God Almighty, in allusion to Koran, xxiv. 8, 9: "But it shall avert the chastisement from her (*i.e.*, the woman accused of adultery), if she testify a testimony four times repeated, by God, that he (the accusing husband) is indeed of them that lie; and a fifth time *that the wrath of the Lord be on her*, if he have spoken the truth."

And punishes the neighbour for the default of the neighbour.—This and the preceding metaphor are sufficiently transparent to allow of dispensing with the exceedingly plain-spoken definition of the neighbour and the neighbour's neighbour, given by Sherîshi, who at the same time relates that the saying was addressed by an Arab to his wife, when she excused herself from meeting his advances in due fashion on the plea that she was visited by her menses. The light, thus thrown on the subject, extends also to the following rebuke of the Kadi, in which the salt-marshes stand for a place where no plants grow, and where sowing seed is as futile as looking out for chickens in a place where no chickens are hatched. In the imprecation, with which he concludes: "May no concern of thine prosper" (*lâ na'ima 'aufu-ka*), the same double meaning underlies the word *'auf*, condition, state of affairs, as the word *qalam* in the first note to Assembly XXXVIII., p. 234, the affirmative form of the idiom *na'ima 'aufu-ka*, being addressed to a man on the point of consummating marriage (Ar. Prov., ii. 747), and in the sentence, "Mayst thou not be safe in that which thou fearest," the object of fear is offspring, either female, which, as we have seen, p. 209 above, is considered as a misfortune by all Arabs, or offspring in general, which the poorer classes amongst them dread in reversed proportion, as it seems, with those amongst ourselves.

By Him who sends down the winds, quotation from Koran, vii. 55, and passim.

She is more of a liar than Sajâḥi (*la-akẓaḥu min Sajâḥi*), according to Harîri's commentary, a proper name indeclinable in the letter *i*, like that of the celebrated grammarian Sîbawayhi (see vol. i., p. 497, and comp. *barâḥi* in Assembly XLVIII.). The woman thus called was the daughter of al-Munẓir, and made claim to the prophetic office in opposition to the pseudo-prophet Musaylamah (see "Dict. of Islâm," p. 422), whom she went to convert or fight, but whose cause she subsequently embraced, giving herself to him in marriage. The proverb concerning her (Ar. Prov., i. 595) is not as quoted in the text, but *aghlamu* (*azná*) *min Sajâḥi*, hotter (more lecherous) than Sajâḥi, probably an intentional slip of Abû Zayd's memory, who trusted in that of his audience to give the retort courteous to the accusation of his spouse by a counter-charge.

He is a greater liar than Abû Ṣumâmah, the surname of the aforesaid impostor Musaylamah, also called al-Kaẓẓâb, the liar, who in the latter days of Mohammed's life rose in rivalry with him, and after the Prophet's death acquired considerable power, until Abû Bekr's general, Khâlid ibn al-Welîd, crushed his followers in a sanguinary battle, in which the false prophet was slain by the negro slave Wahshî with the same lance wherewith he had killed Mohammed's uncle Ḥamẓah in the battle of Oḥud.

More barefaced than bark, etc.—*Abraza* is, lit., more showing forth, *i.e.*, displaying her face without a veil, a sign of immodesty in a woman.

Rijlah, which, for the sake of assonance, I translate by "purslane," is some kind of bitter herb, which grows on the brink of rivers, and is therefore proverbially (Ar. Prov., i. 406), called *ḥamqâ*, foolish, silly, because exposing itself to be undermined and carried away by the current. The river Tigris, whose Arabic name *dijlah* rhymes with it, is considered one of the widest rivers, so much so that a flooded country is called *dijlah*, as resembling it in width and extent.

If Shîrîn had bestowed on thee her beauty, etc.—*Shîrîn*, wife of the Persian king Khosru Perwez, celebrated for her beauty and the sculptor Farhad's fatal love for her.—*Bilḳîs*, Queen of Saba (the Scriptural Sheba, for whom see Koran, xxvii. 22, 23).—*Zobaydeh*, wife of Hârûn ar Reshîd and grand-daughter of Manṣûr, possessed of great wealth, which she spent lavishly in pilgrimage, pious dona-

tions, and the building of mosques.—*Bûrân*, either the daughter of Khosru Perwez, who reigned after his death for forty years, or more probably the wife of the Khalif Ma'mûn, who spread for her on the wedding night a golden carpet, on which he poured from a large vessel a heap of pearls for the waiting women, each of whom took a bead, the remainder being left sparkling on the carpet.—*Az-Zebbâ* (see notes to Assembly XXVII., p. 190 above), proverbial for magnificence and power (Ar. Prov., ii. 147), and thus called from the length of her hair (*zabab*), which she trailed behind her when walking.—*Rabîah*, daughter of Ishmael, of the tribe Kays, a woman of Basra, celebrated for piety (Ibn Khallikan, i. 263).—*Khindaf*, surname of Laila, daughter of Ḥulwân bin 'Imrân, and wife of Alyas bin Modar, surpassing all Arab women in glory, as ancestress of the tribe Koraysh.—*Al-Khansâ*, the Pug-nosed, nickname of Tumâḍir bint 'Amr ibn Harith ibn ash-Sherîd. She lived up to the rise of Islâm, and was the greatest Arabic poetess, famous especially for her elegies on her brother Ṣakhr (comp. Ar. Prov., ii. 617, and see Chenery's note, vol. i., p. 387, to *Being at one time Ṣakhr, at another time the sister of Ṣakhr*).

O thou viler than Mâdir.—Mâdir, nickname of Mokhârik, a man of the tribe Benû Hilâl ibn 'Amir, who had taken possession of a cistern to water his camels, and when it had served his purpose, coated it with his excrements, in order to render it useless to those coming after him, and thereby gave rise to the proverb, "more stingy than Mâdir" (Ar. Prov., i. 190).—*Kâshir*, either a camel stallion belonging to one of the tribes of S'ad ibn Zayd Manât ibn Temîm, who covered no she-camel without her dying, or a year of drought, thus called from its stripping (*qashr*) the ground of vegetation (Ar. Prov. i. 690).—*Ṣâfir* (whistler), a word of disputed meaning (Ar. Prov., i. 326). Some say it signifies any bird that whistles, and that cowardice is attributed to it, because it is in continual fear of birds and beasts of prey. By others it is said to mean a special kind of bird, which, at the approach of night, clings to some branches and whistles all night through from fear of falling asleep and being captured. According to a third explanation, it designates a man who whistles to a woman, so as to give warning of danger, and all the while is cowed with fear lest he be caught at his errand. Lastly, it is stated that the agent "whistling" stands for the patient

"whistled to" (as a signal for flight), as in Koran, lxxxvi. 6, "pouring (*dâfiq*) water" (*i.e.*, sperm) stands for "water poured forth (*mudfûq*)" and in popular parlance "a riding-beast (*râḥilah*)" for a beast ridden upon (*marḥûlah*), a peculiarity of idiom as frequent in Arabic as, *vice versâ*, the use of the patient instead of the agent, for instance, Koran, xvii. 47, "a hidden (*mastûr*) veil" for a "hiding or enshrouding (*sâtir*) veil."—*Ṭâmir*, the Jumper, with his full title, *Ṭâmir ibn Ṭâmir*, Jumper Jumperson, the flea, on account of his extraordinary power of leaping here, there, and everywhere, proverbial for giddiness (Ar. Prov., ii. 52).

More contemptible than nail-parings in a heap of rubbish.—This translation renders the reading of several manuscripts, my own included, which adds after *qulâmah*, nail-parings, the words *fî qumâmah*, in sweepings. Although not admitted into the printed editions, it doubtlessly improves the equibalance of the *qarînah*, and makes the phrase more forcible.

More vicious than the mule of Abû Dulâmeh (Ar. Prov., i. 416), a compendium of all possible depravities, and an impossible one into the bargain, impossible, I mean, to translate decently, but to be guessed at by fox-hunters, who remember what reynard is said to do when hard pressed by the hounds, excusable in his case as a means of self-defence, but in the mule sheer wanton mischief at the cost of harmless passers-by. Her master, son of an emancipated black slave, was a poet who flourished in the days of the last Omayyides and first Abbasides, and he has immortalised the brute by a *Kaṣîdeh* of considerable length and beauty.

More out of place than a bug (or dung-fly) in a perfume-box, in Arabic *aḥyaru minbaqqatin fî luqqat-in*, lit., more bewildered, like one who has gone astray or lost his way, and here meaning that Abû Zayd contaminates his surroundings, as the malodorous insect spoils the scents amongst which it is rushing or fluttering about.

And supposing thou wert al-Ḥasan with his preaching and utterance, etc.—*Al-Ḥasan Abu Sa'îd al-Baṣrî*, proverbial for pulpit eloquence, and a great devotee († A.H., 110; see Ibn Khallikân, i. 188).—*Ash Sha'bî, 'Amir ibn 'Abdallah* of the tribe Sha'b in Yemen, like the preceding a *tâbi'*, or one who had conversed with Mohammed's companions, a great scholar, deeply versed in law, and knowing the Koran by heart. He was a favourite with Ḥajjâj ibn Yûsuf (and

died at Kûfa between A.H. 103 and 107 (Ibn Khallikân, i. 344, and Ar. Prov., i. 413).—*Al Khalîl*, or *Abû 'Abd ar-Raḥmân ibn Aḥmad al-Farâhîdî*, the founder of Arabic grammar and prosody, to the discovery of which latter art he was led by listening to the fall of the hammers of blacksmiths, sounding to him alternately like *daq*, *daq-daq*, *daqaq-daqaq*, etc.; and striking on his ear like the rhythmical measures of the constituent elements of his native poetry, whereupon he built a most elaborate system of metrology (born A.H. 100, †160 or 170; see Ibn Khallikân, i. 252).—*Jerîr*, or *Abû Ḥazrah ibn 'Âtîyah*, considered the greatest poet of early Islâm, rivalled only by Farazdak and Akhṭal, and equally distinguished in erotic and satiric poetry. He died ninety and odd years old, A.H. 110, in the same year as Farazdak, with whom he had carried on a lively warfare of "give and take" in lampoons (see Ibn Khallikân, i. 150).—*Koss*, the eloquent Christian Bishop of Najrân, for whom see Chenery's note on the formula *And now*, vol. i. 269, and who is mentioned passim in other Assemblies of our author.—*'Abd al-Ḥamîd ibn Yaḥyá ibn Sa'îd*, was secretary to Marwân ibn Mohammed, the last Khalif of the House of Omayyeh, and excelled by the beauty of his caligraphy and style, the use of which, however, made in the service of an antagonist, incensed the founder of the Abbaside dynasty against him, who put him cruelly to death.—*Abû 'Amr Rubbân* (according to others, *Zubbân*) *ibn al-'Alâ*, noted for his profound knowledge of the Koran in its seven readings, made a vow to recite the whole of the sacred text every three nights. He was also a great grammarian and lexicographer (born in Mecca A.H. 70, † in Kûfa about A.H. 154; see Ibn Khallikân, i. 403).—*Ibn Koraỳb al-Aṣma'î*, spoken of vol. i., p. 319, and frequently alluded to in the Makâmât. His life will be found in Ibn Khallikân, i. 403.

Ye twain remind me of Shann and Ṭabaqah, and hawk and pellet, lit., I see that ye twain are, etc.—The explanation of the two proverbs here alluded to is disputed, but their meaning in this place is, "I see that you are a match for each other." The first is, *wâfaqa shannun ṭabaqata*, Shann has matched Ṭabaqah (Ar. Prov., ii. 800, 835), where, according to most interpreters, the names are those of two Arab tribes. Others, however, say that Shann was a sharp-witted Arab, who vowed that he would not wed, unless a woman

his equal in sagacity. While he was roaming about in search of her, he met with a travelling companion, whom he asked on setting out together: "Wilt thou carry me, or shall I carry thee?" Said the man: "O thou fool! carries ever one mounted another who is mounted also?" Shann kept silent until they came to a sown field, when he said: "Thinkest thou that this field has already been eaten up or not?" "Thou idiot!" replied the man, "seest thou not that it stands in ears?" Another pause of silence, till they were met by a funeral, and Shann asked: "Reckest thou that the man on the bier is alive or dead?" Then the man exclaimed: "In all my life I have never come across a dafter dolt than thou art; fanciest thou that people escort a living man to the grave?" Presently they reached the village of the man, who made his fellow-traveller welcome at his home. Now he had a daughter called Ṭabaqah, and taking her aside, he related to her their colloquy as a piece of rare fun. But she said to him: "The man was quite right in his speech, and his questions were all that might be expected from one like him. When he asked thee, 'Wilt thou carry me, or shall I carry thee?' his meaning was, 'Wilt thou talk to me, or shall I talk to thee, in order to make us bear up with the tediousness of the journey?' As for his question about the field, whether it had been eaten up or not, he meant, whether its owners had taken and consumed the price of its produce in advance or not. Lastly, when he asked whether the man on the bier was alive, he wanted to know whether he left a son behind, by whom he would continue to live in man's memory, or not." When the host joined his guest again, and told him of his daughter's interpretation of their converse, the latter sued for her hand and married her, and when he brought her to his own people, relating the proofs of sense and sagacity which she had given him, they said: "Shann is well matched with Ṭabaqah." Aṣma'ī is credited with a third, somewhat lame explanation, to the effect that *shann* means a worn-out skin-bag, which, when furnished with an adequate covering, was fitted for further use, and gave rise to the saying in question. The actual form of the second proverb (Ar. Prov., i. 365), applied to one who is frightened by an enemy or put to the test by his equal, is: *khida'a khida'a warâ'a-ki bunduqah*, the verbal meaning of which turns on that of *khida'a*, which may either be the name of a tribe, warned to be pursued by a rival tribe

of the name of Bunduqah, or it may signify the bird thus called (vulture, hawk), in which case *bunduqah* is the pellet of the archer, the tenor of the proverb being: "Hawk, hawk, the pellet is after (or behind) thee!" Applied to the couple engaged in altercation, it means in both cases that either party finds a match in the other.

Enter in thy conduct the level road, allusion to the proverb, "He who enters the level road is safe from tripping" (Ar. Prov., ii. 675), and here intended as a caution to the husband to approach his wife in lawful fashion.

I shall not hoist my sail to him, another metaphor which sufficiently explains itself, considering that it is the sail which makes the ship to go.

With the three binding forms of oath.—These are either the three forms of divorce allowed by ash-Shâfi'î (see "Dict. of Islâm," p. 87, iii., and p. 90, v.); or the oath by the name of God in its three forms: *wa'llâhi, bi'llâhi, tallâhi*; or divorce, manumission of a slave, and pilgrimage to Mecca.

The fundament of either of you has missed the pit, a proverbial expression (Ar. Prov., i. 444) applied to one who misplaces anything or misses the object of his wish, and arising from a man's having dug two holes, the one for keeping provisions in, the other to serve as a privy. His two sons mistook the former for the latter, when he addressed them with the words above.

And make an example of you for those who have eyes to see, alluding to Koran, iii. 11: "In this truly was a lesson for men endued with discernment."

And naught I water but my field for planting.—Compare to this the note on p. 244 above.

That it is I who taught the Shaykh to versify with such glibness, in Arabic *anni 'llatî laqqanuti 'sh-shaikha 'l-arâjîzâ.* In translating thus I follow the reading of my own MS. in preference to De Sacy, who, probably misguided by the French idiom, "C'est moi qui ai," adopts the reading: *laqqantu* (1st person) *zâ 'sh-shaikha.* Naṣîf al-Yazaji, in his critical letter, censures him on this point, proposing the very reading which my MS. contains, and Mehren, who has translated and annotated this letter, defends the French against the Arabic scholar, but the redactors of the second edition of De Sacy refute Mehren's arguments in a lengthy note, which, I think, settles the

question definitely. *Arâjîz* is plural of *urjûzah*, a poem in rejez metre, and as this is a very popular and easy-flowing kind of metrical composition, I feel myself justified in rendering the word in this place by "to versify with such glibness," and a little lower down by "doggerel-rhyme."

He would be like one who pays a debt with borrowed money, and prays the sunset prayer with two inclinations (instead of the prescribed four, which it is unlawful to cut short, even when travelling), meaning that what he had done was as if he had done nothing, since a debt thus paid is still a debt, and a prayer thus curtailed is valueless.

I testify that ye twain are the most crafty amongst men and jinn, allusion to Koran, lv. 31: "We will settle accounts with you, O ye men and jinn," lit., ye two heavy, *i.e.*, troublesome, ones.

THE FORTY-FIRST ASSEMBLY.

Listening to the tunes of song, in Arabic *uẕunan li 'l-ughârîd*, lit., being an ear to songs, a remarkable idiom, closely akin to the English, "I am all ear."

And repented of my falling short in my duty towards Allah, allusion to Koran, xxxix. 57: "So that a soul say, 'O misery!' *for my failures in duty towards God!* for verily, I was of those who scoffed.'"

And returned from dissipation to collectedness, lit., whose spreading out has returned to being folded up (*wa fâ'a mansharu-hu ilâ 't-ṭaiyi*). A note in my MS. says: "*Manshar* is an infinitive, in the sense of the patient or passive participle *manshûr*, that which is spread out, *i.e.*, the pages of the book in which his transgressions are recorded, meaning that by his repentance this book has been folded up or closed, and De Sacy adopts this explanation in his commentary. But it seems simpler and more natural to take with Sherîshi *mansharu-hu* in the sense of *intishâru-hu*, his launching out into the dissolute pleasures of youth and passion, from which he has returned by repentance to a proper and self-possessed frame of mind, like a garment which has been spread out and is folded up again. Preston translates: "Whose conduct was reformed from laxity to strictness," and aptly quotes the Latin rendering of the passage: "Cujus animus

solutus rediisset in plicam," probably from Peiper's Latin translation of the Assemblies, mentioned vol. i., p. 101.

When foreign travel had cast me to Tanîs.—Tinnîs, or Tanis, from which latter form the name of the Tanitic mouth of the Nile is derived, was formerly an important town in the Delta, renowned for the fabrication of costly stuffs of various kinds. It is surrounded by an inlet of the Mediterranean, into which the Nile rises at the season of inundation, so that its water is salt during one half of the year and sweet during the other half.

Through his love for it he is slaughtered without a knife.—This may mean either simply without the use of a knife, or, as Sherîshi explains, otherwise than by a knife, for instance, by a stone or a club, in which case death would not follow instantaneously, but under prolonged suffering. Preston translates accordingly: "He perishes by a lingering death," referring to the torment and misery to which the worldling is doomed by his wretched devotion to the world. It seems, however, to me that the preacher intends to say: He is not bodily killed by violence, but his moral life is destroyed by the very pleasures and sensual gratifications which the world offers to him.

I swear by Him who sent forth both the waters, sweet and salt, and lit up the twain, sun and moon, in Arabic *man maraja 'l-baḥraini wa nauwara 'l-qamaraini*, lit., "who set free the two seas and gave light to the two moons." Preston renders the former by: "who mingled the water of the two seas," and accompanies the word "mingled" by the note: "If we suppose 'the two seas' here spoken of to be the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, this rendering of *maraja* is best. But if 'the two seas' intended be the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, it is best to translate *maraja* 'mix'; and that these are the two intended is rendered probable by the fact that one of the titles of the Turkish Sûltan is 'Lord of the two seas,' *i.e.*, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean." This is ingenious enough, as far as it goes, but it seems strange that he, as well as De Sacy and the redactors of his second edition, has overlooked the allusion to Koran, xxv. 55: "And He it is who hath let loose the two seas, the one sweet, fresh; and the other salt, bitter"; and *ibid.*, lv. 19: "He hath let loose the two seas which meet each other," to which latter quotation comp. *ibid.*, xxxv. 13: "Nor are the two seas alike:

the one is fresh, sweet, pleasant for drink, and the other salt, bitter," etc. When, moreover, the dictionaries tell us, that *baḥr* is a term both for the sea and for a large river like the Nile, the passage, as translated by me, appears particularly appropriate to the place where the scene of the Assembly is laid (see the note on Tanîs above). As for the expression *al-qamarâni*, the two moons, for sun and moon, *ash-shamsu wa'l-qamaru*, as the two seemingly greatest luminaries, Sherîshî remarks, that they are designated by the dual of *qamar*, moon, on account of its easier pronunciation and masculine gender, not by that of *shams*, sun (in Arabic feminine, reversedly with the English idiom), although the former is less brilliant and borrows its light from the latter. In similar manner, the two immediate successors of Moḥammed in the Khalifate, Abû Bekr and 'Omar, are called al-'Umarân, in spite of the pre-eminence accorded to Abû Bekr over 'Omar, because this name adapts itself more readily to the dual form.

And exalted the dignity of the two (holy) stones.—The two stones are meant, either for the two precious metals, gold and silver, or for the black stone of the Ka'beh, and the holy rock in the Temple of Jerusalem, to which Mohammed tied his mount Borâk after his night-journey to heaven; or, the same black stone at Mecca, and the so-called station of Abraham, the sacred stone upon which Abraham stood when he built the Ka'beh, and which is said to bear the impression of his footmarks. The character of the address renders it more than probable that either of the two last mentioned explanations applies here to the exclusion of the first, for which reason I insert in parenthesis the word "holy" in my translation.

Who plunges into the abode of fire, while he treasures gold and hoards up riches.—Allusion to Koran, ix. 34: "O Believers! of a truth, many of the teachers and monks devour man's substance in vanity, and turn them from the Way of God. But *to those who treasure up gold and silver*, and expend it not for the cause of God, announce tidings *of grievous punishment*," *i.e.*, the torment of the blazing fire of hell. On the worthlessness and perishableness of worldly goods, the poets are eloquent. Abu 'l-'Atâhîyah, for instance, says:

"O thou who exaltest thyself by the world and its pomp, such exalting is but that of clay by clay;

If thou desirest for the noblest of all men, then gaze at a king in the garb of a mendicant;

I see man content with the most trifling share of religion, but in life they are by no means satisfied with a trifle;

Let then Allah suffice thee instead of the world of kings, as the world suffices kings instead of religion."

Or, to quote the words of another poet:

"Anybody addicted to this life is nobody in our eyes, and this abode of perishableness we reck not an abode:

For our riches are but loans, which he who lends will presently take back from him that borrows."

Feather the free, etc.—Compare to this Assembly XI., vol. i., p. 167, l. 4, and the note to it, *ibid.*, p. 368.

By the Faithful, the Guardian.—See Koràn, lix. 23: "He is God, beside whom there is no god. He is the King, the Holy, the Peaceful, *the Faithful, the Guardian*, the Mighty, the Strong, the Most High! Far be the Glory of God from that which they associate with Him."

Will ye enjoin on men what is right, and forget your own souls?—Quotation from Koran, ii. 41: "Will ye enjoin what is right upon others, and though ye read the Book, forget your own souls?" Mohammed is related to have said: "In my night-journey I passed by some men, whose lips and tongues were being cut off with scissors of fire. Then I asked, Who are these, O Gabriel? He said, These are the preachers from amongst thy people who enjoin on mankind that which is right, and forget their own souls." Abu 'l-Aṭâhîyah addresses Manṣûr ibn 'Ammâr (for whom see Ibn Khallikân, ii. 545) in the following words:

"O preacher of men, thou hast become suspected, since thou blamest actions of theirs which thou thyself committest,

Like one who clothes in garments the naked, while his nakedness is apparent to men, without his trying to conceal it;

Yet the most grievous case known in any soul, after idolatry, is its blindness for its own sins,

Its knowledge of the faults of others which it clearly perceives, while it perceives not the fault within itself."

That will do, a popular English idiom for the equally popular Arabic *qad-ka*, which is synonymous with *ḥasbu-ka*, "let this suffice thee." The following "shame on thee" is in the original *itta 'ib*, imperative of the 8th form of *wa'b*, which is generally explained by

istahî, be ashamed, in which sense the verb has occurred in Assembly XVIII., p. 212, l. 10. According to other authorities, it is equivalent to *irja'*, return! be gone! leave off!

He turned his back and went without returning.—This is taken from Koran, xxvii. 10: "And when he (Moses) saw that it moved itself as though it were a serpent, *he retreated backward and returned not.*" Also xxviii. 31: "And 'Throw down now thy rod.' Then when he saw it stir itself as though it were a serpent, *he retreated and fled and retraced not his steps.*"

THE FORTY-SECOND ASSEMBLY.

Clinging closer to me than love to the Benû 'Uẕrah, and bravery to the race of Abû Sufrah.—The tribe of the Benû 'Uẕrah were famous for their fatal love-passion, of which an instance is related in the three hundred and eighty-fourth of the Arabian Nights. One of their poets sings:

"If an 'Uẕrî escapes from death through love, that one, by the Lord of lovers, is an interloper,"

and the tale goes that an Arab was asked, "From what tribe art thou?" He answered, "From a people, who when they love, they die." Whereupon a damsel, who had heard him, exclaimed: "An 'Uẕrî, by the Lord of the Ka'beh." As for the race of Abû Ṣufrah, they are his son al-Muhallab, commander of Baṣra under al-Ḥajjâj, and the sons of al-Muhallab, who were all distinguished for valour and every knightly virtue, so that a poet in the Ḥamâseh says of them:

"The race of al-Muhallab are a stock endowed with glory, such as no Arab has attained, nay, nor comes near attaining."

Abû Ṣufrah is the *kinyeh* of Ẓâlîm (oppressor) ibn Ṣarrâq or Ṣârîq (robber), the ominous significance of which names induced Khalif 'Omar to refuse him a post of Governor for which he had applied. His sons and grandsons played a conspicuous part in the troubles caused by Mu'âwiyeh's usurpation of the Khalifate (see Weil, "Geschichte der Chalifen," i. 365 and following).

Now when I had alighted at Najrân, in Arabic *fa lammâ alqaitu 'l-jirâna*, lit., when I had laid down my neck, for which idiom

compare Assembly XIX., vol. i., p. 215, l. 3ô, and the note at the bottom of p. 446, *ibid.* Najrân is a town of Yemen, called after its founder, Najrân ibn Zayd, and halfway between Saṇâ' and Ḥaḍramowt, in ancient times mostly inhabited by Christians, whose eloquent Bishop Koss has been mentioned repeatedly.

Forsooth the morning-brightness shows clear to those possessed of eyes, a proverb (Ar. Prov., ii. 255) which admits of two interpretations. De Sacy, in his commentary, says it is applied to anything perfectly self-evident, and the verb *baiyana* (shows) is here used intransitively for *tabaiyana.* Sherîshi, who mentions this explanation without repudiating it, remarks, however, that the night in its darkness is the same for the blind and the seeing; but that the morning, when it appears, reveals all objects to those endowed with eyesight. I have tried in my translation to preserve the ambiguity.

And beholding holds the stead of two witnesses, i.e., is equally convincing. The passage alludes to Koran, ii. 282: "And call to witness two witnesses from among your men; but if there not be two men, let there be a man and two women of those whom ye shall judge fit for witnesses," namely, such as are upright, *'adl,* which term Ḥarîri uses here as synonym of *shâhid,* witness.

And responded to his challenge to the combat, in Arabic *wa mulabbâna dâ'iya munâbazati-hi,* lit., they were saying *labbai-ka* to the caller for combat with him (comp. Ḥarîri's Preface, vol. i., p. 105, line 10 from the bottom, where a similar expression occurs).

Their wrath was allayed, lit., their knots were loosened, a proverbial expression for the abatement of anger, for which see Ar. Prov., i. 251.

A driver she has, kinsman of hers, meaning the rope by which the canvas fan is led, and which is, like itself, made of hemp.

Through whom the Writ [*imâm*] *is known, as holy recording angels take their pride in him.*—This translation is based on the supposition: 1. That the word *imâm* is here used in the same sense as Koran, xvii. 74: "One day We will summon all men *with their writ* (*bi-imâmi-him*); then they whose book shall be given into their right hand shall read their book, and not be wronged a thread." It is true that Rodwell renders "with their leaders," but most commentators interpret the term as above, and this view of the case is eminently supported by xxxvi. (the celebrated Sura Yâ Sîn) 11:

"Verily it is We who will quicken the dead, and We write down the works which they send on before, and the traces which they leave behind; and everything do We set down in a clear Writ (*fî imâm-in mubîn-in*)." Rodwell translates, or rather paraphrases, "in the clear Book of our decrees," and says in a note, "lit., *in the clear prototype*, that is, in the Preserved Table, on which all the actions of mankind are written down." 2. The preceding inference seems to justify me in assuming that *al-kirâm* has in our passage the same meaning as in Koran, lxxx. 11-15: "Verily it (the Koran) is a warning (and whoso is willing beareth it in mind); Written on honoured pages, Exalted, purified, By the hands of Scribes, *honoured* (*kirâm-in*), righteous." Also lxxxii. 10-12: "Yet truly there are guardians over you—*Illustrious recorders*—(*kirâman kâtibîna*) cognisant of your actions." A more commonplace explanation is that under *imâm* the Khalif is meant, said to be made known by the pen, because it writes down his commands and decrees, and that *kirâm* signifies distinguished official scribes or secretaries, who take pride in their pen, because it frequently assures to them access to the highest dignities under Government. Still, the former interpretation seems preferable, the more so as the word riddled upon, in Arabic *qalam*, is in itself an allusion to the Koran, whose Sura lxviii. has it for its title.

When given to drink he flies about like one athirst, and settles to rest, when thirstiness gets hold of him, meaning that the pen, when supplied with ink, hurries along the paper like one in search of drink, and when it is thirsty, *i.e.*, dry for want of ink, it rests, contrary to man, who anxiously moves about in seeking for water, when he is thirsty, but rests when his thirst is quenched.

And no offence at his wedlock is ever found, lit., "In his marriage there is no way against him," where the word way or road (*sabîl*) is to be taken as in Koran, ix. 92: "It is no crime in the weak, and in the sick, and in those who find not the means, to stay at home (in times of war), provided they are sincere with God and His Apostle. In those who act righteously, there is no *cause of blame* (*mâ min sabîl-in*): and God is Gracious, Merciful." In this passage of the sacred text *sabîl* is explained with *ṭarîq bi 't-taʿzîb*, way for punishment.

As the spouses are growing grey, lit., with the grey hair (*'inda 'al-*

mashîbi), where the article stands for the personal pronoun "their," and allows, therefore, the substitution of the nouns to which this pronoun refers. This use of the article is frequent enough in Arabic, but the commentators find it worth their while to mention that it is sanctioned by the Koran, xli. 31: "We are your guardians in this life and in the next; yours therein shall be *what your souls desire* (*mâ tashtahî 'l-anfusu* [the souls] for *anfusakum* [your souls]), and yours therein whatever ye shall ask for."

One swerving although firmly joined, bestowing gifts not working mischief.—This seems to me the most simple and natural way of rendering the play on the word *jâfi*, which I take first in the sense of deviating, inasmuch as one of the sides of the water-wheel continually seems to turn away from the other, although they are inseparably united (*mauṣûl*); secondly, in that of exercising tyranny, doing injury, meaning that the water-wheel, far from causing a disastrous inundation, fertilizes the fields by irrigating them, and is therefore called *waṣûl*, which the commentators paraphrase by *kaṣîru 'l-aṭâ'*, abounding in benefits.

Yet is his fierceness to be feared.—His fierceness signifies here excessive swiftness of rotation, which may put the machinery of the wheel out of order and damage the receptacles for the water. The purity of heart refers of course to the limpidity of the water contained in those receptacles.

And close your five upon them, i.e., close your fingers upon them, for "preserve them well in your memory." The expression "five" for "fingers" has occurred in the seventh Assembly, vol. i., 140.

Now the desire for more beguiled (istafazzat) the people into allowing themselves to be taxed with dulness.—The verb, here used, is another idiom borrowed from the Koran, xvii. 66, where, after the refusal of Iblîs to prostrate himself before Adam, it is said to him: "And *entice* (*istafziz*) such of them (Adam's offspring) as thou canst by thy voice."

One veiled as if sorrowful, yet gladsome apparently.—Here it is difficult for the translator to do justice to the original. To render the text at all intelligible, it must be stated that the cooling-flask, or refrigerator, is a green jar, covered with canvas, whence its name, *al-muzallamah*, the enveloped one, and lined between this cover and its own outer surface with a layer of straw, to keep the water in it

cool in summer time. The middle of it is perforated, and holds a tube of silver or some other metal, by which people drink out of it. It is therefore in the riddle called *masrûrah*, provided with a navel (*surrah*), referring to the hole into which the tube is fixed, but also passive participle of the verb *surûr*, to rejoice, and therefore translated gladsome. It is further described as *maghmûmah*, which may either mean covered, as the sky is covered by clouds (*ghumûm*), or grieved, sorrowful, part. pass. of the verb *ghamm*, to grieve.

Approached for her offspring's sake at times, i.e., in summer on account of the water which is contained in it, like the offspring, lit., the fœtus, in the mother's womb. The second "at times" means, of course, in winter, when the cooling-flask is shelved away, which is playfully stigmatised as an act of cruelty or ingratitude for services rendered afore.

Her outward attire is showy, disdained is her undercloth.—The showy outward attire is a gaily coloured wrapper over the coarse canvas-cover, and the disdained undercloth (lit., lining) is meant for the coating of straw, which, however, ought not to be despised, since it serves the wise purpose of keeping the water cool.

Seen during Ḥajj he ceases to be seen on 'Îd, how strange to tell.—The word translated by Ḥajj, pilgrimage, is in Arabic *al-'ashr*, for *'ashru ẕî 'l-ḥijjah, i.e.*, the first ten days of the month *ẕû 'l-ḥijjah*, in which the pilgrimage takes place, and during which period the nails are allowed to grow; and the word translated by 'Îd is *an-naḥr*, the day of sacrifice, called *'îd*, or feast, which terminates the pilgrimage, when the nails are pared again. At the same time, the former word may signify the ten fingers, the natural place of the nails, and the latter the throat or chest, where none are to be found, a double meaning which it is, of course, impossible to render in English.

If both wear painted cheeks, she is put to torture, i.e., if either end of the match is coated with naphtha, it is made to burn.

What is the thing that when it corrupts, its error turns to righteousness? —Meaning that wine, which is forbidden to the believer, turns into vinegar, when it gets sour, and thereby becomes lawful.

One fickle and leaning with one half to one side, etc.—To render this plain, it will suffice to transcribe Sherîshi's commentary on the passage: "In spite of his fickleness and leaning to one side (*i.e.*, partiality), he is always seen in an elevated place, like a king who

distributes justice (meaning either that the balance is lifted up by the hand, or raised on a stand). Common stone and gold are the same to him, and if thou look at him with the eye of the sagacious, thou wilt wonder to find that people are satisfied with his decision, although he is by nature partial to one of the litigants, showing a bias towards him."

And reck this to be our dowry of divorce.—The dowry or provision of divorce (*mu'tatu 't-ṭilâqi*) is a gift made by the husband to a wife, divorced before consummation has taken place, in obedience to Koran, ii. 237: "It shall be no crime in you, if ye divorce your wives, so long as ye have not consummated the marriage nor settled any dowry on them. And provide for them—he who is in easy circumstances according to his means, and he who is straitened, according to his means: this is a duty for those who do what is right." Here the meaning is: Let the revelation of thy pedigree be thy parting gift before we separate.

THE FORTY-THIRD ASSEMBLY.

As one who shakes two divining arrows, i.e., divided between despondency and hope, like one who shakes the two arrows of success and failure (comp. p. 80 above). According to others, it alludes to the popular saying: "Either booty or loss, either dominion or destruction."

And the onslaught of the host of Ḥâm, equivalent to the preceding words, "the downfall of darkness," Ḥâm, son of Noah, being the father of blackamoors, and therefore his army a simile for the blackness of night.

Whether to gather my skirt, and tether or face the night and grope my way, meaning whether I should tuck my garments round me for taking my night's rest, after having tied up my travelling beast, or continue my journey at all hazards and in spite of all difficulties and obstacles. In the above translation I use the infinitives of the verbs, for the sake of conciseness, but in the original the aorist is employed, "or face the night," for instance, is expressed by *am a'tamidu 'l-laila*, "or should face the night." This is the reading of the native prints, which I adopt in my own edition. De Sacy has *aghtamadu*, which is explained by: "should make the night my

scabbard" (*ghimd*), in a similar sense as it is said in Assembly XXIX.: "I made night my shirt." But while the latter comparison graphically pictures a state of utter denudation and penury, the simile of the scabbard seems somewhat far-fetched and inappropriate.

Now while I was revolving in my mind for what I should decide myself, lit., while I was turning about my deliberation and churning my resolve, the Arabic for which latter verb is *imtikhâz*, explained as *istikhrâju 'z-zubdati mina 'l-labani*, the bringing out of the butter from the milk.

Drowned in sleep, in Arabic *aktaḥala bi-ruqûdi-hi* (he had applied *koḥl* by his sleep), where the sleep which had taken possession of him is likened to *koḥl*, or antimony applied to the eyes. In the next line these eyes are called "his two lamps," lit up again on his recovery from unconsciousness, which, as it were, had extinguished them.

Thy brother or the wolf, a proverb which also takes the form "the brother or the night," and applies to one who is in doubt and perplexity. The meaning is that Abû Zayd was frightened by the other's sudden appearance, and asked himself, Is he whom I see a friend or foe, but as the words are spoken in the hearing of Al Ḥârith, they are addressed at the same time to him, implying the question: Dost thou approach me with friendly or hostile intention? Wherefore he replies: No, I am but a casual comer, who has lost his way in the darkness of night (comp. Ar. Prov., i. 75).

So give me light, that I also may strike it for thee, another proverb, in the explanation of which the commentators exercise their ingenuity, as is so frequently the case, to little purpose. Some take objection to it on the ground that he who has the means of striking a light for himself applies not for a light to another. Maydâni (Ar. Prov., ii. 8) says it means: "be for me, then I shall be for thee," *i.e.*, I shall prove towards thee, as thou provest towards me, and a further explanation is: "be more for me than I can be for thee," since giving light is more than merely striking it. It seems to me that Abû Zayd's reply, in connection with what had gone before, makes the matter sufficiently clear. In apostrophizing himself audibly to Al Ḥârith with the words, "Thy brother or the wolf," he admitted implicitly that the latter had an equal right to suspect

the intentions of a stranger whom he had met accidentally. Al-Ḥarith therefore says, Enlighten me as to thy own disposition towards me, and I will model mine accordingly towards thyself. To this Abû Zayd answers, in allusion to the first-quoted proverb: "*Let thy anxiety be at rest, for thou hast many a brother whom thy mother bore not,*" thereby clearly indicating that he was animated only by feelings of a most friendly kind. The appropriateness of this second proverb (Ar. Prov., i. 529, 549) lies more in the sense which it derives from the context than in its original purport, which, far from removing suspicion, expresses such. It is attributed to Lokmân ibn 'Âd, who, it is told, found in a house to which he had come to quench his thirst a woman engaged in dalliance with a man, and on asking her, "Who is this youth at thy side, for I know that he is not thy husband," was answered, "He is my brother," whereupon he uttered the above rejoinder.

With the approach of morning people praise night-faring, proverbial for bearing hardships in the hope of ensuing rest (Ar. Prov., ii. 70). The saying originates with Khâlid ibn al-Welid, when Abû Bekr bade him go from Yemâmeh, where he happened to be, to Irak. He proposed to travel by the waterless desert, when Râfi' aṭ-Ṭâ'î said to him: "I have traversed it in the time of ignorance. It allows of watering the camels only on the fifth day, and I think thou wilt not be able to cross it unless providing thyself with water." So he bought a hundred generous camels, which he let grow thirsty, and after having watered them, he sewed up their pudenda and muzzled them. After two days' travel in the desert he feared the effects of thirst on his men and horses, and that the water in the bellies of the camels might be absorbed. He therefore drew it off, and made the men and horses to drink, whereupon he continued his march. In the fourth night Râfi' said: "Look out whether you can see some lofty Lotus-trees; if so, all is well; if not, we are doomed to perish." The men did so, and having got sight of the trees, brought him the tidings, when he exclaimed, "God is great!" and the people shouted with him, "God is great!" and rushed towards the water. But Khâlid, recited the following lines:

"How doughty a wight is Râfi', when rightly guided he has crossed the waterless desert from Qurâqir to Suwá,

A five days' journey ; when the craven travels it, he weeps ; no man is to be found that performed it before him ;

With the approach of morning, people praise night-faring, and all that drowsiness had concealed from them reveals itself in brightness."

The Arabic for "a five days' journey" of my translation is *khims-an*, objective case of the noun *khims*, a desert in which water is so scarce that the camels can only be watered at an interval of five days, and its nominative has occurred above in Râfi''s address to Khâlid. Qurâqir and Suwá are the names of two watering-stations.

While his saddle-beast flitted along (*stepped hurriedly, taziffu*) *with the speed of the young ostrich*, allusion to Koran, xxxvii. 92: "Then his tribesmen rushed on him with *hurried steps* (*yaziffûna*)."

I had her exhibited to me for sale at Ḥaḍramowt.—Ḥaḍramowt is as mentioned in the Epitome, an important town on the south coast of Arabia Felix, noted for its camel breed and its cord-wainery, from which the Arabic titles of this Assembly are derived, Bakrîyah being the noun of relation of *bakr*, a young camel, and *ḥaḍramîyah* being that of Ḥadramowt, applied both to a camel bred in that locality and to a peculiar kind of shoes or sandals manufactured there.

And I endured death-pangs to acquire her, an idiom which, as far as energy of expression goes, is an improvement on the English, I was dying to obtain possession of her.

Until I found her proof for travels and a provision for the time of stay, meaning that her strength and power of endurance were equal to the most fatiguing journeys, and that her milk and foals provided means of support when I was staying at home. My translation follows the reading of the Beyrout edition : *wa'uddata qarâr-in*, although in my text revision I had adopted that of De Sacy, and of my own MS., *'uddata firâr-in*, which would signify "an equipment for flight."

Who knew not what pitch is, i.e., who never suffered from scab, which would require the application of pitch to the affected places (comp. the note to Assembly XXXVIII., p. 234, above).

Now it happened that she had strayed some little while since, in Arabic *muẕ muddatun*, where the student should notice the nominative of the depending noun, in accordance with the rule, stated by Ḥarîri himself in his grammatical treatise "Mulḥatu 'l-i râb," on the govern-

ment of the two synonymous particles *munẓ* and *muẓ*. Both are equivalents of *fi*, in, with regard to the present, and of *min*, from, for, meaning since, with regard to the past; but while the former governs the oblique case in either sense, the latter governs the oblique case with the present, and requires the nominative of the noun with the past. "I have not seen him to-day" would therefore be *mâ ra'aitu-hu munẓ al-yaumi*, or *muẓ al-'yaumi*, but "I have not seen him for two days (two days since)" would be *munẓ yaumaini* (oblique case), or *muẓ yaumâni* (nominative). This, at least, is, in Ḥarîri's opinion, the more elegant construction, although the lexicographical authorities have a great deal more to say on the subject.

Nor the quiet of despair, meaning, nor could I persuade myself to give over further search as hopeless, which would, in a certain measure, have set my mind at rest, in the sense of the proverb: "Despair is one of the two kinds of rest."

Her blemish has been cut short, in Arabic *'arru-hâ qad ḥusima*, which to him, who understands the mount of Ḥaḍramowt to be a camel, would mean that she had been cured of the scab, but applied to the shoe, that the scars of scab in the hide, from which it was made, had been removed by the knife of the shoemaker. In like manner, other similarities between the two are more or less forcibly explained, as, for instance, "her back is as though it had been broken and re-set," refers to the elevated part on the upper side of the shoe-sole, which resembles the swelling that remains in a broken limb after its re-setting. This part of the shoe is called *sanâm*, the usual term for the hump of a camel. To trace the comparisons further would only weary the English reader, but for the Arabs it was a favourite theme, even with poets such as Mutenebbi, who in his poems frequently plays on these double-meanings.

She adorns her who travels thereon, and furthers the journey at the oncoming of night, a somewhat lengthy rendering of the Arabic *tazînu 'l-mâshiyata wa tu'înu 'l-nâshiyata*, in which I follow Sherîshi's explanation as the simplest and most plausible. As referring to the shoe, he takes *mâshiyah*, fem. of *mâṣhî*, walker, to mean the walker's foot, *rijl*, which, like other double members of the human body, is in Arabic feminine, while with regard to the camel, *mâshiyah* would be any female walking along with it. *Nâshiyah* stands, according to him, for *nâshi'ah*, with change of the Hamzeh into *y*, to make it conform

with the preceding *mâshiyah*, and its literal sense is the growing one, figuratively applied to the early part of night, when, after the heat of day, travelling on foot or beast is helped on, *i.e.*, becomes less toilsome in the hot climate. For this meaning of the word *nâshi'ah* comp. Koran, lxxiii. 6: "Verily the *oncoming of night* is most fitted for earnest devotion, and speech is more collected." The substance of this passage is disputed amongst the commentators, but about the word in question most of them agree.

When I alighted at Yabrîn, a town three days' journey distant from Yemâmeh on one side, and from Ḥasâ on the other, and forming with them a triangle, Yemâmeh lying to the west, Ḥasâ to the east, and Yabrîn to the south.

On whom one could perceive that the birds might perch quietly, i.e., the gravity of his demeanour and his dignified restfulness were such that they might have emboldened the birds to alight on him. Similarly a poet of the Ḥamâseh says:

"As though the birds had settled on their heads, no fear of violence, but the awe inspired by majesty;"

and tradition relates that it was said of Mohammed's companions "as though the birds rested upon their heads." To a grave and placid person, the proverb is applied: *inna-hu la-wâqi'u 't-ṭairi*, "he is one on whom the birds alight."

If it is she by whom he expected twenty.—The Arabic *it'ṭiya bi-hâ 'ishrîna* may mean: he was given *for* her twenty, viz., denars, or given *with* her twenty, viz., blows, an ambiguity turning on the force of the preposition *bi*, and which I have tried to preserve in the above translation, which may signify either he hoped to realize by her the price mentioned, or he was afraid to receive the same amount of slaps by means of her. It is quite in the character of a popular jester, like the one introduced here, to speak the next moment of a thing expected as if it had really taken place, when it serves his purpose to have the laughter of the audience on his side. So he presently says the evidence of his own eyes must show him that nobody would offer twenty for this shoe, or if he wants to prove that he has got his twenty with it, let him bare the back of his neck, and everybody would see the traces of the blows.

And do good according to thy power.—De Sacy reads here, *wa-'j'ali*

'l-khaira bi-ḥasabi ṭâqati-ka, which he explains in his commentary: "Give me for her keep as much as thou canst afford." The redactors of the second edition of his text remark to this: "On the margin of a MS. the words *wa-'jali l-khaira* are said to mean *wa-'shkuru 'llâha*, render thanks to Allah, which seems to us preferable to the interpretation given in the note. The Kadi is far too generous to demand payment for the care bestowed by him on the camel which he had found.". De Sacy himself, however, mentions that some MSS. have *fa-f'ali 'l-khaira*, and do good, and this, with the substitution of *wa* for the initial *fa*, is indeed the reading of my own MS. and of the native editions. While, therefore, concurring in the opinion that the Kadi enjoins gratitude towards Allah to Abû Zayd, I think that by doing so in the words of the last quoted versions he alluded to Koran xxii. 76: "Believers! bow down and prostrate yourself, and worship your Lord, and *work righteousness* (*wa'f'alû 'l-khaira*)," implying that the most meritorious way of paying thanks to God is by demonstrations of piety and the performance of good actions.

So live as long as camels speed the pilgrims on.—The original says: "Mayst thou last as long as the ostrich and the camels last" (*dum dauma 'n-na'âmi wa-'n-ṇa ami*), to which the commentators remark, that the ostrich is said to live a thousand years, and the race of camels dies never out, so that the phrase means, live for ever. The word *na'am* is, of course, used for the rhyme's sake, and *na'âm* for that of alliteration, but although the mention of camels may be justified by the subject-matter of the Assembly, the ostrich may be easily dispensed with, and I hope I shall not be blamed for my attempt to bring the last line into closer connection with the first one and its allusions to the Ka'beh and the sanctuary of Mecca. For *na'am* some MSS. read *ni'am*, kind deeds, pl. of *ni'mah*, which in itself would be appropriate enough, but make the ostrich appear still more out of place.

Without dinning his benefit into my ears.—The Arabic *imtinân* is mentioning to another boastfully the benefits conferred on him, and making him feel painfully the obligation he has incurred. Hence the name *mannânah*, given to a rich woman who has married a poor man, and keeps harping on the advantages she has bestowed on him (comp. the note on *ḥannânah*, p. 270, below).

By Allah, yea, in Arabic *allahumma na'am*, lit., "O Allah! yes," an idiomatical use of the vocative, which in De Sacy's commentary

is explained in a lengthy note, translated in full by the redactors of the second edition, vol. ii., p. 80. It emphasises the negative or affirmative answer to a question, by apostrophising the Divine Power, to call it as it were to witness of the truth of the reply, and will be easily understood by the English reader, if he remembers such familiar expressions as "Good gracious! no." "Good heavens! yes."

Whose face pleaded in his favour, lit., in whose face there was an intercessor, taken from a poem of Ibn Ḳanbar, in which he says: "How ever great an offence he may have committed, he is excused for what he has done, for in his face there is an intercessor, that effaces the offence from the hearts of men." A tradition attributes to Mohammed the saying: "Three things gladden the eye: to look at the verdure of the fields, at running water, and at a beautiful face."

And a hidden egg, viz., of the ostrich, which hides its eggs in the grass, to protect them from dust or injury (comp. Ass. XLVI., below), an allusion to Koran, xxxvii. 47: "And with them (the inhabitants of Paradise) the large-eyed ones with modest refraining glances, fair like *the sheltered egg*." Beautiful women are compared to the egg of the ostrich on account of the whiteness of their complexion, and the yellowish tint which mingles with it. Thus Imr al-Kays, in the 32nd verse of his "Mo'allaḳah" (Arnold's edition, p. 14), likens his mistress to the egg of the ostrich, or, according to others, to a virgin pearl, whose whiteness is suffused with a shade of yellowness.

No intimate has known her, in Arabic *lâ 'staghshâ-kâ lâbis-un*, lit., a coverer has not enveloped her. This alludes to Koran, ii. 183: "You are allowed on the night of the fast to approach your wives: they are your garment and ye are their garment," a simile for the intimacy and close connection between husband and wife, the former of whom is accordingly called *lâbis*, as though he covered the latter with a garment. Compare the English term to cover, for to embrace or know carnally.

The experienced who repeats her favour, in Arabic *al-mu'allilah*, the active form of the participle, of which the passive occurs in verse 15 of the "Mo'allaḳah," just quoted:

"Then I said to her, Travel on, loosening the camel's rein, and repel me not from the repeated culling of thy fruit."

An easy knot for the wooer, i.e., a knot easily untied, in allusion to the proverb *mâ 'iqâlu-ki bi-unshûṭat-in*, the tether of thy love is not lightly loosened (Ar. Prov., ii. 621).

And have displayed the two hinds—al-mahâtainî, dual of *mahât*, a wild cow, with whose eyes the eyes of a woman are compared, in analogy with the Homeric epithet *βοωπις*, bestowed on the queen of the gods.

And which rouses thy appetite?—a translation which I beg the indulgent reader to consider rather as a modest rendering of the asterisks, which the Beyrout edition substitutes to the unsophisticated words of the text than of the words themselves.

A stone to be feared by the adversary, in Arabic *al-murâjim*, which Sherîshi explains, he at whom thou throwest stones and who throws stones at thee.

From which the cupping-places are made to bleed, meaning the shoulder and lower part of the neck.

Her intercourse is unprofitable, lit., is a thunder-cloud without rain (*ṣalifatun*) from *ṣalaf*, little rain, accompanied with much thunder, whence the proverb, many a scanty rainfall is under the thunder-cloud, applied to a man who praises himself much and has little merit, or who assumes a threatening air without standing his ground when it comes to the point (Ar. Prov., i. 535). Sherîshi, however, explains *ṣalîfah* by fastidious, disdainful, deriving it from *ṣalîf*, side of the neck, the showing of which to a person corresponds to the English idiom "showing him the cold shoulder." Lastly, it is said to mean untractable, difficult to manage, from *arḍun ṣalifatun*, a hard ground which resists cultivation.

Her hand is clumsy (*kharqâ'*).—This word is variously interpreted as "foolish," "unskilful in handiwork," "too proud to work with her fingers," "wanting in gentleness," "lavish in household expenditure." A proverb says: *al-kharqâ'u lâ ta'damu 'illat-an*, the foolish woman is not at a loss for pretexts (Ar. Prov., iii., P. 1, p. 364).

Her night is a night indeed.—One of the many grammatical resources of Arabic is to create comparatives of any noun, by forming the measure *af'al* from the respective root. I remember to have read somewhere an amusing story of a judge who, being carried across a swollen stream astride on the back of a client, uttered the prayer: "O Allah, strengthen this ass, to bring me safely over."

Said the client within himself: "Thou callest me an ass, and makest use of me as such, but thou art a greater ass than I" (*aḥmar*, more of an ass, comparative of *ḥimâr*, ass), presently dropping him into the water, where the poor man would have been drowned if his judicial embonpoint had not served him as a life-buoy, that floated him comfortably to the shore. In similar manner the noun *lail*, night, forms the comparative *alyal*, more of a night than night itself, which occurs in the phrase *khâbiṭu lailin alyali* (by metrical license for *alyala*, the comparative form being imperfectly declined), which Chenery translates: one stumbling in the night-dark night (see vol. i., p. 129, six lines from the bottom). The fem. of *alyal* is *lailâ'*, as in the passage now under consideration, the Arabic of which is: *wa-lailatu'hâ lailâ'u*, the objective case of the noun depending on the preceding *inna*. The same expression has been met with in Assembly XV., where Al Ḥarith is made to say: "Until I formed a wish that I might be granted a talk-fellow, who (as Chenery again renders it) *should shorten the tedium of my night-dark night* (*li-yaqṣura ṭûla lailatî 'l-lailâ'i*, see vol. i., p. 186, and the corresponding note, *ibid.*, p. 398). The native Dictionaries describe both *lailun alyalu* and *lailatun lailâ'u* as synonyms of *lailun lâ'ilun*, where *lâ'il* has the force of an active participle, as we would say "nightening" for "darkening," and which they explain as a long and dark night, or as one of the three nights preceding the new moon. In the present instance I think my translation, "her night is a night indeed," expresses sufficiently the idea which the precocious youth wishes to convey.

And to know her needs the lifting of a veil.—This may mean, her real character is a mystery to the husband, which only reveals itself to him after long acquaintance and intercourse, or, according to others, it refers to her virginity and its physical sign.

And subdues the experienced stallion, in Arabic *wa'ẓra'ati 'l-fanîqa 'l-bâzila*, literally, she subjugates the stallion, who has grown the tooth *bâzil*, and is then called by the same name, an event which takes place with the camel of either sex, when it has reached the ninth year. The term stands here metaphorically for a man of whom we would say, "he has cut his wisdom-teeth." For the verb *aẓra'at* comp. the proverb: "The fever has humbled me before thee," or in another version, "The fever has made me succumb to

sleep," which professes submission to a calamity, and is said to originate with an Arab of the tribe Kalb, named Murîr, or Murîn, who uttered the words when, in an attempt to liberate his brothers from the captivity of the Jinn, he was, in consequence of a fever, overpowered by sleep, and fell captive himself to one of them (Ar. Prov., i. 364).

So I look out for one who holds and spends, i.e., one who has hoarded up money and expends it freely, so that I may indulge in fine raiment and pleasant companionship.

One dainty (*zawwâqah*, of fastidious and changeable taste, especially in matters matrimonial), alluding to a saying attributed by tradition to Mohammed, in answer to a man who had told him that he had divorced his wife: "Allah loves not the dainty, either man or woman."

I was and have become, meaning "under my former husband I was honoured and well-to-do, but now I am despised and poverty-stricken."

And if she thus be a habitual lamenter, blest with family and withal a bold-faced wanton.—A lamenter, *hannânah*, is a woman who always bewails the late lamented, and blest with family, *barûk*, is explained as one who has up-grown sons. For the following "and withal" De Sacy reads "or," which in itself would be preferable, but is not warranted by the native editions and the MSS. consulted by me.

Then he chid me as the tutor chideth at the slip of his pupil.—The word translated with chiding (*intihâr*) is taken from Koran, xciii. 10: "And as to him that asketh of thee, chide him not away (*lâ tanhar*)."

Dost thou bethink thee of what thou hast heard? in Arabic *aturâ-ka mâ sami'ta*, lit., wilt thou be made to see or ponder? where the pronominal suffix of the first verb is not considered as a *maf'ûl* or objective case, but as corroborative of the inflectional pronoun, just as we might say: "Wilt thou be made to see for thyself," or "with thy own eyes?" Compare Koran, vi. 40, and Bayḍâwi's commentary; also De Sacy, Gramm., i. 1189, and ii. 866, note.

That there is no monkery in Islâm, alluding to a tradition which makes Mohammed say: "In Islâm there is no monkery (*ruhbânîyah*) and no celibacy (*tabattul*)," the former Arabic term being derived from *ruhbân*, a Christian monk, the latter from the verb *batl*, cutting

off, which in its fifth form means cutting one's self off from all worldly concerns, and in particular abstaining from sexual intercourse. To the same root the word *batûl*, virgin, is to be traced, which is applied to the Virgin Mary and to Mohammed's daughter Fâṭimeh. Another tradition relates that the Prophet asked of 'Akâf ibn Wadâ'ah: "O 'Akâf, hast thou a wife?" and when he answered in the negative, Mohammed said: "Then thou art of the brothers of Satan; if thou belong to the Christian monks, stick to them; but if thou belong to us, one of our ordinances is the married state."

Sobers thy sight, i.e., prevents thy eyes from looking at other women.

Through her thou beholdest the coolness of thy eye, and the flower sweet to thy nostrils.—These two similes, and the metaphorical expressions which follow them, stand for offspring.

How, then, art thou averse to the ordinance of the sent ones, refers to the traditional saying of Mohammed: "Four are the ordinances of the apostles, the use of scents (for hygienic purposes), the cleansing of the teeth by the *miswâk*, matrimony, and a bashful behaviour" lastly, "*the advantages enjoyed by the owners of a household*" alludes to another tradition by which Mohammed is recorded to have said: "Two inclinations (in prayer) of those who possess a family are better than eighty-two of a celibate."

And darted aside as the locust darts, an allusion to the proverb *anzá mina 'l-jarâdi*, more given to darting off than locusts (Ar. Prov., ii. 791).

So that thou mayst indulge thyself a bit, and dispense with a damsel thou wouldst have to endower.—Here again I am obliged to tone down the terse literalness of the original, while trying to preserve the idiomatical force of its two diminutives, at least in form, *'umairah*, a name given here to the hand, as instrumental in a vice severely denounced by Mohammed, and *muhairah*, diminutive of *mahîrah*, a woman of noble birth, and therefore exacting a large dowry.

And not let thy generation grow to man's estate, i.e., mayst thou die young, for if Allah shortens the lives of those who belong to the same generation with him, his own life will be but short.

By Him who has planted the forests, in Arabic *bi-man anbata 'l-aikâ*,

the final word being a plural, the singular of which occurs in Koran, xxvi. 176, and passim.

Lick up the honey and ask no questions, viz., ask not where it comes from, or as a modern proverb has it: *kuli 'l-baqla wa lâ tasal 'ani 'l-maqbalah*, eat the cabbage, and ask not for the cabbage-field (comp. Ar. Prov., ii. 393).

That the goal of his talk was distant, and that the Shaykh was a mighty sharp one.—The former idiom, in Arabic *ash-shauṭu baṭînun* (for which comp. Ar. Prov., iii., P. 1, p.262) is taken from a race-horse, whose course up to the goal is called *shauṭ*. The second, in the original *ash-shaikhu shuwaiṭînun*, means literally the Shaykh is a devilkin, the epithet being the diminutive of *shaiṭân*, Satan, which, as a note in my MS. remarks, "is *faiʿâl* of *shuṭûn*, being distant, on account of his remoteness from the Mercy of Allah." But *shaiṭân*, applied to men and Jinn, has also the meaning of haughty, mischievous, cunning, and the diminutive is explained as *ṣâḥibu adabin wa dahâ'-in*, possessed of learning and sagacity.

And see clearly thy quiddity, in Arabic *istabantu inna-ka*, which may be interpreted: "I fully perceive what *inna-ka* means, when thou art concerned." It will be remembered that the inchoative particle *inna*, behold, is placed before a nominal sentence, governing the accusative of the subject, which of course may be an affixed pronoun, and the nominative of the predicate, for instance, *inna Zayd-an* (*inna-hu*) *la-'âlimun*, behold Zayd (behold he) is learned indeed, which is more emphatical than the simple sentence, *Zaydun âlimun* (*huwa 'âlimun*) Zayd is learned (he is learned). The youth, therefore, intends to say, I know perfectly what kind of a man thou art, and am not at a loss how to complete my speech when I begin it with *inna-ka*, "behold thou art." The word quiddity, as an abstract noun derived from another part of speech, seems a fair equivalent.

In this place poetry fetches not a barley-corn, etc.—The satire, contained in this and the preceding passage, is a favourite theme with the poets. One, for instance, says:

"If the eloquence of Sahbân, and the caligraphy of Ibn Muḳlah, and the intellect of the Benû Kand, and the piety of Ibn Adham
Were collected in one man, and that man poor, though free-born withal, he would not be worth a dirhem,"

where the attribute "free-born," besides implying that he has enjoyed a liberal education and is highly cultivated, at the same time suggests that he is of no value, even if he is sold as a slave, because such a sale would be invalid, as amusingly illustrated in Assembly XXXIV.

THE FORTY-FOURTH ASSEMBLY.

I came in a night of deepest darkness, in Arabic *'ashautu fî lailatin dâjiyati 'ẓ-ẓulmati*. The verb *'ashautu* means originally I came at nightfall, but subsequently it took the signification of "I came" in general, in which it governs the preposition *ilâ*, to. Followed by the preposition *'an*, from, it occurs in the sense of departing in Koran, xliii. 35: "And whoso *shall withdraw from* (*man ya'shu 'an*) the Warning of God of Mercy, We will prepare a Satan for him, and he shall be his fast companion."

Her bosom closely buttoned.—This simile is explained by the following *qarînah*, the purport of which is that the heaped-up clouds covered the sky so completely that no interstice was left for the stars to shine through.

I was colder therein than the eye of the chameleon and a mangy goat, two proverbs to the same effect, for which see Maydâni's Collection, i. 743. The eye of the chameleon is said to be cold, because, according to the popular belief, it always seeks the sun and the warmth emanating from it, while the denudated state of the mangy goat sufficiently accounts for her suffering from the severity of the seasons. The word used for cold (*ṣard*, in the comparative *aṣrad*) is in this signification borrowed from the Persian *sard*, the Arabic root *ṣard* having different meanings, as being scanty, missing the aim, etc. In the short commentary, attached by Ḥarîri to this Assembly, he mentions that some lexicographers declare the second of the above proverbs to be a misreading of the first, caused by displacing the diacritical points of *'aini 'l-ḥirbâ'i*, which thereby becomes *'anzi 'l-jarbâ'i*. Prosaic matter-of-fact people deemed probably the former too fanciful, and thinking the shivering goat a more appropriate comparison, tried to improve on the eye of the chameleon, although

they had to introduce a spurious *al* before the word *'auz*, which article has nothing whatever to do with the word *'ain* of the original proverb, as this noun governs another noun in construction.

Well is he wont to ward against the ills of time with gathered ashes, sharpened knives, literally: "he is against the evil of time, accustomed to evil, one gathered of ashes, sharpened of knives," a thoroughly idiomatic expression for: his heaped-up ashes and sharpened knives proclaim that he is always ready to kindle his fires and slaughter his animals for the benefit of those who suffer from the hardships of time and take refuge with his hospitality.

Whose camels [*'ishâr*] *bellowed, whose cauldrons* [*a'shâr*] *boiled.*—The connecting link between the two words *'ishâr* and *a'shâr* is the numeral *'ushar*, ten, the former being pl. or collective noun of *'usharâ'*, a she-camel who has been pregnant for ten months or thereabouts, when she drops her young, during the whole of which time she goes by the above name; the latter, originally the pl. of *'ushr*, a tenth part, is applied to a kettle so large that it equals ten of ordinary size in capacity.

Who were gathering the fruit of winter, i.e., enjoying the warmth of the fire. Ḥarîri, in the above-mentioned commentary, quotes the following lines of a later poet:

"Fire is the fruit of winter; who then desires in winter to taste fruit, let him warm himself,
Ay, fruit in winter is worth wishing for, but fire is for the frozen the best that he can taste."

And when embarrassment had passed away, in Arabic *wa lammâ an sarâ 'l-ḥaṣaru.* The word *ḥuṣar*, which has occurred in Ḥarîri's Preface, vol. i., p. 103, l. 12, and was translated there by "hesitation," has here the meaning of embarrassed silence, which would be natural at the first meeting of many persons hitherto unacquainted with each other.

Proof (lit., *protected*) *against the blamer and caviller, i.e.*, the most fastidious and dainty eater would not have been able to find fault with them.

Then we heeded not what is said about gluttony.—This alludes to the proverb: *al-bitnatu ta'fanu 'l-fitnata*, gluttony does away with sense, with regard to which the meaning of the next clause is, "on the contrary, we found sense in indulging it." It is reported of the

Khalif 'Omar that he used to say: "Be on your guard, O men, against gluttony, for it corrupts the body, and makes you neglectful of prayer, and heirs to sickness." (Comp. Ar. Prov., i. 180.)

For he crouched apart.—This alludes to the proverb: "he grazes in company (*wasaṭan*, literally, in the middle, *i.e.*, amongst the rest), and lies down by himself," applied to one who is ready to partake in another's affluence, but turns aside from him at the approach of misfortune (Ar. Prov., ii. 910).

And were afraid of being worsted when we questioned him, in Arabic *wa khashînâ fî 'l-mas'ilati 'l-'aula*, literally, "we feared in questioning the disproportionality," an idiom taken from the Mohammedan law of inheritance, for which see Chenery's note on the passage *the day's duties pressed upon us* of Assembly XXI., vol. i., p. 462.

Verily this is naught but stories of those gone before (lit., of the first or former ones)—quotation from Koran, vi. 25: "and though they see all kinds of signs, they refuse faith in them until, when they come to thee to dispute with thee, the infidels say, 'Verily, this is nothing but fables (*asâṭîr*) of the ancients.'". I translate the Arabic term *asâṭîr* with stories, because its singular *isṭûr*, or *usṭur*, has etymologically been identified with the Greek ἱστορία. Its derivation from *saṭr*, writing, as that which has been written down, appears, however, quite as legitimate, if not more so.

Then he begged a hearing from the night-talkers.—In the original the singular "night-talker" (*sâmir*) is used, to which Ḥarîri comments: *sâmir* is a collective noun, standing for the plural *summâr*, as *ḥâẓir*, lit., one present, is a name for a tribal division alighting at a watering-place, and as *bâqir* means a herd of cattle, or, according to others, cattle together with their herdsmen. The word *sâmir* itself is derived from *samar*, the shade produced by the moon, in which the night-talkers mostly assemble, whence the proverb, "*lâ ukallimu-hu 'l-qamara-wa-'s-samara*"—"I shall not talk to him in the moon-light, or in the shade of the moon" (Ar. Prov., ii. 418; compare also vol. i., p. 303, the note on "His talk-fellow").

The second signification of "nasl" is "running fast."—In this sense the word occurs Koran, xxi. 96: "And they *shall hasten* (*yansilûna*) from every high land."

In a camel-litter between cords (*sabab*).—For the meaning of cord, as applied to the word *sabab*, comp. Koran, xxii. 15: "Let him who

thinketh that God will by no means aid his Apostle in this world, and in the next, stretch a cord to heaven," etc.

It is what the world knows as wine.—This seems to be the meaning of *khamru 'l-ʿâlami*, the wine of the world, to which De Sacy remarks, "*i.e.*, the Ghubairâ' is like wine, such as its qualities are known to mankind, in which regard there is no difference between them."

In which latter sense some commentators explain the Koranic imshû.—This occurs Koran, lxvii. 15, where, however, Rodwell translates: "Traverse then its (the earth's) broad sides" (*fa'mshû fî manâkibi-hâ*). According to the interpretation mentioned here by Ḥarîri, the meaning is: "may ye have abundance of cattle," by way of prayer for their prosperity, which is in keeping with the concluding part of the passage: "and eat of what He has provided—unto Him shall be the resurrection."

Dumb withal.—Dumbness, says De Sacy's commentary, is ascribed to him in order that the hearers should not think *ḥâ'ikan* to be a metathesis of *ḥâkiyan*, one who relates a story, as *shâkî*, one clad in full armour, is transposed into *shâ'ik*. Without having recourse to the supposition of such a metathesis, I may mention that *ḥâ'ik* denotes also one who composes poetry, which to the Arab mind appears as the spontaneous outpour of the emotions of the soul, and therefore naturally as improvisation. For this reason I translate somewhat freely "deaf and dumb," since from a person afflicted with this infirmity, poetical effusions would scarcely be expected.

Wonders will never cease, lit., then, how many wonders are there in creation!

And also "the telling of a lie."—In the passage of the Koran quoted to this (xxvi. 137), the expression *khalqu 'l-auwalîna* is used in the same sense as *asâṭîru 'l-auwalîna* in that quoted, p. 275, above.

And also the lachrymal gland.—Sherîshi mentions a third signification of *gharb*, a large bucket, and explains in this connection *ḥalab* with *saiyalân*, running, streaming, which, however, scarcely yields a satisfactory meaning, and seems not to have been in Ḥarîri's mind when he composed this line.

Of Arabs and wives beloved.—This translation follows De Sacy's reading *min 'urbin wa min 'urubi*, which is also that of my MS. The

native editions have *min 'ujmin wa min 'urûbi*, where *'ujm* is pl. of *'ajam*, one who speaks Arabic badly or not at all, a foreigner.

And also used metaphorically for "woman."—Compare the expression *libâs*, garment, in the same sense which occurs in the Koranic passage quoted, p. 267, above.

It is no nest of thine, so get thee out, in Arabic *laisa bi-'ushshi-ki fa-'drujî*, a proverb applied to one who claims or usurps that to which he is not entitled. Ḥarîri, in his commentary to the Assembly, remarks that *'ushsh* is the term for a nest built on a tree, while *wakr* is a nest made on a wall or in a mountain-cave.

He taunted us with the taunt of the unconcerned towards the troubled.—Comp. Ar. Prov., ii. 612, 815; also i. 720.

The coaxing before provoking the milk-flow, in Arabic *al-înâsu qabla 'l-ibsâsi*, another proverb (Ar. Prov., i. 94), taken from the habit of the milker to coax the camel before he draws the milk, saying to her during the act, *bus, bus*, in order to keep her quiet and elicit a copious flow. The camel which gives milk freely when this is said to her is called *basûs* (compare Chenery's note on *The war of Al Basûs*, vol. i., p. 526 and foll.). The meaning of the passage in the context is, of course, that Abû Zayd expects to be gratified by a gift before vouchsafing the explanation of his verbal puzzles.

One of those who want a return for their gift.—The four concluding words of this sentence are in Arabic represented by the single word *shukm*, the opposite of which is *shukd*, a free gift. In some manuscript copies of Ḥarîri's commentary the following line of a poet is quoted:

"My gift to be returned (*shukmî*) is ready, and likewise my free gift (*shukdî*), for good and evil there is a place with me,"

where, however, the meaning seems to be, I am equally prepared to return evil for evil, as good for good.

It grieved our host, in the original *sâ'a abâ maṣwá-nâ*, lit., the father of our place of shelter, or, as Ḥarîri explains, the entertainer, to whom they had repaired, and whose hospitality they were enjoying.

An 'Îdî camel and a robe like Sa'îd's.—An 'Îdî camel means, according to the author's commentary, either one descended of a generous stallion of the name 'Îd, or the noun of relation refers to 'Îd ibn Mahrah, a tribal division, which, like the tribe Mahrah itself, was renowned for its camel breed (comp. the note on Mahrîyah,

p. 238, above). A robe like Sa'îd's alludes to a garment in which Mohammed clad Sa'îd ibn al-'Aṣ when he was a youth.

A disposition like Akẖzam's, a proverb the origin of which is ascribed to Sa'd ibn al-Ḥashraj, grandfather of Ḥâtim Ṭay, the prototype of generosity with the Arabs and the people of the East in general, when he found that the youth Ḥâtim, in growing up, had developed more and more the liberal and magnanimous qualities for which his own grandfather Akẖzam was renowned, saying: "a disposition which I know from Akẖzam" (Ar. Prov., i. 658). Maydânî (ii. 688) adduces the authority of Ibn al-Kalbî for the statement that the proverb originated with the father of Akẖzam, which latter is said to have been a disobedient and undutiful son to him. When Akẖzam died he left sons behind him, who one day assaulted their grandfather and wounded him severely, whereupon he indited the following verses:

"Children of my own blood have stained me with my blood, whoever meets with lions amongst men, will be wounded, a disposition known to me from Akẖzam."

The verses occur in the Ḥamâseh, p. 646 of Freytag's edition, where the Commentary attributes their authorship, implying that of the proverb, to various other persons. Ḥarîri, in his own notes to this Assembly, asserts that they were composed by 'Akîl ibn 'Ullafah, and that the final words are only a quotation of the current proverb. This is probable enough, and in this case 'Akîl evidently means simply to say, that the disposition of his sons was inherited from their father, as that of Ḥâtim was from his grandfather Akẖzam.

He sprang to the camel and straightway saddled her, etc.—This passage has been translated as interpreted in Ḥarîri's commentary, which takes occasion from the term "saddled" (raḥala) to supplement the explanation of *râḥilah*, saddle-beast, mentioned p. 247 above, by the remark that it applies as well to the male as the female camel, and that its feminine termination has no reference to the sex, but is that of intensity (*mubâlaghah*). To the word "mounted" (*irtaḥala*), the author quotes a characteristic anecdote recorded of Mohammed, to the effect that once, when he was prostrated in prayer, and his grandson Ḥasan riding on his back, he prolonged his devotion and afterwards said: "The little one had

mounted me (*irtaḥala-nî*), and I was loath to curtail his pleasure." Lastly to "hastened on" he refers to the tradition: "At the approach of the hour (of resurrection) a fire will come forth from the bottom of 'Aden, which will hasten on mankind."

Contented with a chance draught, nashḥ, lit., a draught insufficient to quench the thirst, and, according to the dictionary Muḥît, by opposition, drinking one's fill.

And went away under every star of heaven, a proverbial expression applied to those who separate and travel on different roads (comp. Ar. Prov., i, 508).

THE FORTY-FIFTH ASSEMBLY.

And checked his bark, in Arabic *khasa'at-hu 'ani 'n-nubâḥi*, lit., *scared him away from his bark*. The verb, which is here transitive in the sense of driving away a dog, etc., is also used intransitively for taking one's self off, as in Koran, xxiii. 110: "He will say (to those whose balances at the day of judgment shall be light), 'Be ye driven away into it (*ikhsa'û fî-hâ*, the pronoun referring to hell-fire), and address Me not.'"

And eased his back after his pebble-throw.—Jamrah, here translated with "pebble-throw," is the ceremony of stoning the devil at Mina, which concludes the rites of the pilgrimage, and thereby removes the weight, which, as it were, is imposed on the back of the pilgrim by his religious duties. A marginal note in my MS. says, *'anâ bi-hâ 'l-nuṭfatu*, the author means by it the semen virile, and however distasteful the repeated allusions to the pilgrimage and its ceremonies may appear to the European mind, in connection with these matrimonial squabbles, we must not forget that Orientals look on such matters simply as natural facts, and, far from intending blasphemy, honestly believe they mitigate in this way their language in speaking on subjects of that kind.

He followed Abû Yûsuf's view.—This eminent lawyer, a disciple of Abû Ḥanîfeh, was born at Bagdad A.H. 113, and died A.H. 182, after having filled the office of Chief Justice (*qâẓî 'l-quẓât*) under Hârûn ar-Reshîd and his two immediate predecessors. The lesser pilgrimage, or *'umrah*, consists in the performance of the ceremonies

of circumambulating the Ka'beh, and running between al-Marwah and as-Ṣafâ, but omitting the sacrifices and other observances of the Hajj. The practice of combining the *'umrah* and the *ḥajj*, wearing the same *iḥrâm*, or pilgrim's cloak, is called *qârin* "joining," that of performing the *'umrah* before the *ḥajj* in the same year, but in a different *iḥrâm*, is termed *tamattu'*, "reaping advantage," because it procures the advantages of both ceremonies. Lastly, the name *ifrâd* (isolation) is given to either act, if performed separately in different years.

Obedient to old Abû 'l-Murrah's hest.—Abû 'l-Mûrrah is a nickname given to Iblîs, because it was that of the old man of Nejd, in whose likeness he appeared to the Koraysh, instigating them to destroy Mohammed by the sword.

Who clears himself from doubts cast on him, lit., who explains his excuse in that which causes her to doubt.

Professed so staunchly by 'Uẕrah's tribe.—Compare the note on the Benû 'Uẕrah, p. 255, above.

Like one who vows chastity for caution's sake, in Arabic *hijrâna 'affin âkhiẕin ḥiẕra-hu*, with the renouncing of the chaste, who takes his precautions, in allusion to Koran, iv. 73: "O ye who believe, make use of precautions" (*khuẕû ḥiẕra-kum;* the passage refers to the mode of warfare to be adopted against the infidels).

And not from grudge held I aloof from my field.—The final word, in the sense in which it is used here, is again taken from the Koran, ii. 223: "Your wives are your field; go in therefore to your field in what way soever ye will; but do first some act for your soul's good; and fear ye God, and know that ye must meet Him; and bear these tidings to the faithful."

Thou lack-food and lack-a-lance, lit., "O thou who art no food and no tilting," *i.e.*, neither possessed of the one nor fit for the other. De Sacy and the Beyrout edition read here: *yâ man huwa lâ ṭa'âmun wa lâ ṭi'ânun*, with the full nominative termination of the two nouns; while my own MS. has *lâ ṭa'âma wa lâ ṭi'âna*, in the accusative without *tanwîn*. These are the most approved of the legitimate five modes of construing the repeated absolute negative *lâ* with two nouns, which are illustrated in Palmer's "Arabic Grammar," p. 255, by the different manners of expressing the celebrated ejaculatory prayer: "There is no strength and no power but with God," in

Arabic. In the above passage of our text the negative and noun together form logically a compound, as rendered in my translation. The word *ṭi'án*, infinitive of the third conjugation, stands here metaphorically for *jimá'*, copulation, which has the same grammatical measure *fi'âl*.

When for every grazing creature there is a pasture ground, in Arabic *wa li-kulli akûlatin mar'án*.—The woman affects in this speech the language of the proverbs, intending to say that everybody has his appointed share in the bounty of the Creator, and therefore ought to be contented with his lot, and trust in Providence. But although the saying does not appear in this form amongst the proverbs of the Arabs, its leading words are contained in the proverb: *mar'án wa là-akûlata*, "a pasture, but none to graze on it," which is applied to a rich man, who allows no other person to take part in the enjoyment of his wealth (Ar. Prov., ii. 619). *Akûlah* means originally a sheep, which is fattened in order to be slaughtered for food, but is here used in a general sense for any grazing animal, and the above sentiment is taken from Koran, xi. 8: "And there is no moving thing on earth whose nourishment dependeth not on God, and He knoweth its haunts and final resting-place; all is in the clear Book."

If thou wert to wrangle with al-Khansâ she would go away from thee silenced.—For al-Khansâ comp. the note, p. 246, above.

There is enough in his concern for his growling entrails (qabqab) to make him forget his pendulum (zabzab).—This alludes to the proverb: *man wuqiya sharra laqlaqi-hi wa qabqabi-hi wa zabzabi-hi faqad wuqiya 'sh-sharra kulla-hu*, which may be translated freely: "He who is safe from the mischief of his rattler (tongue), and his growler (belly), and his swinger (penis) is safe from all mischief" (Ar. Prov., ii. 663).

After appeal to the judge, in Arabic *ba'da 'l-munâfarah*. This is originally a technical term for the contention before an umpire on the titles of a man or tribe to nobility or honour over others, for which see Chenery's note on *Pride* to Assembly XII., where the word occurs in the form *nifâr* (vol. i., p. 375). Here, however, it is merely a synonym of *muḥâkamah*, judicial contest, litigation in a court of justice, or of *taḥâkum*, which a little lower down will be translated "resort to the judgment-seat."

Content therewith the two hollows.—*Al-ajwafân*, the two hollows, is

equivalent to *al-ghârân*, the two caves (*os et pudenda*), for which compare the note, vol. i., p. 460).

Resist the stirrer of mischief (*nâzigh*) *between two friends*, allusion to Koran, vii. 199, where the same verb is applied to Satan: "And if *stirrings* to evil from Satan *stir* thee, then fly thou for refuge to God; He verily heareth, knoweth!"

For the handsome way in which he had dismissed them, in the text *'alá ḥusni 's-sarâḥi*. The word *sarâḥ*, which originally means allowing the cattle to pasture freely, if applied to a woman, signifies divorce, and has here the sense of dismissal, as in the proverb *as-sarâḥu mina 'n-najâḥi*, dismissal is part of success (Ar. Prov., i. 602). In explanation of this the commentators say: "If thou art not able to supply a man's want, thou shouldst make him despair, *i.e.*, renounce all hope of obtaining it." It is therefore tantamount to the proverb, "Despair is one of the two kinds of rest," which we have met with in a former Assembly (see p. 264 above).

So he rose to go defiantly, but came back defeated.—This translation is more in accordance with the spirit than the letter of the two proverbs quoted in the text. He rose to go defiantly is in Arabic *nahaza yanfuzzu mizrawai-hi*, lit., he rose shaking the extremities of his buttocks, a proverbial expression for the threatening and arrogant deportment of an adversary, which 'Antarah did not hesitate to use in one of his kaṣîdehs (Ar. Prov., i. 301). He came back defeated, *'âda yazrilu aṣdarai-hi*, alludes to the saying, "He came beating his shoulders" (Ar. Prov., i. 288), which means, "He came empty-handed, without having accomplished his object."

Flight with Qurâb is the wiser thing.—Here again I follow the reading of my MS. in preference to De Sacy, who writes *kirâb* with *kasrah* instead of *qurâb* with *ẓammah*. The latter is the name of a generous steed which belonged to 'Abdallah, the brother of Durayd ibn aṣ-Ṣimmah. They were engaged in war, and Durayd, considering himself and his people inferior in force to the enemy, advised his brother to flee, with the words quoted above, implying that speedy flight was more prudent than fighting on unequal terms. Abdallah, however, would not listen to him, but resolved on combat, in which he was killed, and the horse taken captive. Abû Zayd in this version, therefore, means to say that to flee in the utmost haste was the safer course for them. On the other hand, *qirâb* signifies

the scabbard of a sword, or any case in which a mounted traveller keeps his utensils; or it may be synonymous with *qarîb*, that which is near at hand and easily carried off. In this form the proverb is said to originate with Jâbir (according to others, Khâlid) ibn 'Amr al-Mâzanî, who, while journeying with some companions, saw the tracks of two men on the road, and, through his skill in reading footprints, discovered them to be men of great violence and rapacity. He therefore urged his companions to take to flight with the most portable of their goods, before losing the rest of them together with their lives. Thus the purport of the proverb, and its application in the present instance, would be to enjoin contentment with small advantages, such as the couple had already reaped, without running into danger in the hope of getting more (see Ar. Prov., ii. 210).

Nay, the return to the charge is praiseworthier, in Arabic *bali 'l-'audu aḥmadu*: The comparative *aḥmad* is formed from the passive participle *maḥmûd*, praised, when the sense would be, if a beginning is to be praised, the return to the same line of conduct is still more so (Ar. Prov., ii. 130). Some interpreters take the adjective in a personal sense, "one praiseworthier," and contend that *al-'aud* stands for *ẕû 'l-'aud*, "he who returns," as, according to this view, *firâr* in the preceding note stands for *ẕû 'l-firâr*, he who takes to flight. But as Abû Zayd in the verses following repeats the word *al-'aud* in the sense of return, in evident allusion to the words of his wife, the former explanation seems to me more appropriate.

Even though its keeper made it free to all comers.—The Arabic *sabbalu-hâ*, here rendered with "made it free to all comers," means the same as *ja'ala-hâ fî sabîli 'llâhi*, gave it over in the way, *i.e.*, service of Allâh to the use of the public (others read *fî sabîli 'l-khairi*, by way of a good action, or explain the phrase by *aḥalla-hâ li 'bni 's-sabîli*, made it lawful to the son of the road, *i.e.*, the traveller).

Abû Mûsá, before thee, has been deceived.—The text says: Before thee the Shaykh of the Ash'aris has been deceived, alluding to Abû Mûsá 'Abdallah ibn Kais al-Ash'arî (†A.H. 44), who was appointed together with 'Amr ibn al-'Aṣ, to be arbiter between 'Ali and Mu'âwiyeh after the battle of Ṣiffîn, and was outwitted by 'Amr to Ali's detriment (see Weil, "Geschichte der Chalifen," i. 230 and following).

THE FORTY-SIXTH ASSEMBLY.

A most ardent desire, in Arabic *ṭalabun yâ la-hu min ṭalabin*; a thoroughly idiomatic expression, the literal rendering of which would be "a desire, O what of a desire it was," the vocative particle *yâ* referring to the pronoun of the third person, and this itself being affixed to the so-called *lâmu 't-ta'ajjub*, or particle of admiration. Similar constructions occur in the beginning of the lines of the "Hamâseh," quoted vol. i., p. 449, in the Note on *The guarded domain of Kolayb*: "Oh lark! (*yâ la-ki min qubburatin*), the valley is open to thee in this pasture land," and in the poet Zû 'l-Rummah's verse: "Oh, oval cheek (*yâ la-ki min khaddin asîlin*), and tender speech and form, that only a caviller would presume to blame." In both these examples the vocative particle and that of admiration have the same reference to the suffix of the second person feminine, which they have in our text to the third of the masculine.

To sound the stupidity of the people of her soil.—The character of dulness and stupidity was, according to Moṭarrezi, so well established in public opinion, as to the natives of Emessa, that if the people of Bagdad wished to denote a man as a consummate fool, they called him Ḥimsî, one born at Ḥims.

With the swiftness of the shooting-star when it swoops down to stone, viz., the Shaiṭâns stealing a hearing from the angels, allusion to Koran, lxvii. 5: "And of a surety We have decked the lower heaven with lights, and have placed them there to be hurled at the Satans, for whom We have prepared the torment of the flaming fire." Also xv. 17, 18: "And We guard them from every stoned Satan, save such as steal a hearing: and him do visible flames pursue."

Whose old age was coming on and whose youth had turned its back on him, a reversal of the proverb *adbara gharîru-hu wa aqbala harîru-hu* (Ar. Prov., i. 484), generally explained by "whose pleasant disposition had departed and whose peevishness had come," taking *harîr* in the sense of yelping or snarling, like an ill-natured dog. But Sherîshi rightly remarks, that this description is not borne out by the schoolmaster's demeanour towards his pupils, whom he treats in the sequel of the Assembly with playful kindliness. He, therefore, derives the word from the idiom *harra 'sh-shauk*, the thorn has

dried up and grown hard, like the teeth of a cat (*hirr*), and considering it as a synonym of *yabs*, dryness, brought on by old age, renders it by *haram*, senility. With regard to *gharîr*, he observes that one of its meanings is "one who stands security or bail," and refers it to youth, as a guarantee for length of life. This seems sufficiently to justify my translation, which at the same time is not inconsistent with the first mentioned interpretation.

So that I might test in him the learned folks of Hims, meant, of course, ironically, as presently indicated by the avowed intention of the narrator to fathom the essence of the man's foolishness.

And greeted me with even a handsomer greeting than I had given him, in accordance with the injunction of the Koran, iv. 88: "If ye are greeted with a greeting, then greet ye with a better greeting, or at least return it; verily God taketh count of all things."

Indite the unadorned couplets, in Arabic *al-abyâta 'l-'awâṭila*, *i.e.*, those which contain only words consisting of letters without diacritical dots.

Nor gain'st thou glory courting girls full of hip, lit., and the place for seeking glory is not a damsel with heavy hips. This translation is based on the reading *marâdu 'l-ḥamdi*, which is that of the native editions and of my MS., the governing noun *marâd*, with *fatḥah*, being explained by Sherîshi as a synonym of *mar'á*, pasture ground. De Sacy prefers *murâd*, wish, which, however, seems here less appropriate, and gives scarcely a satisfactory sense.

And praise he wins, etc., lit., his knowledge that the one-eyed are not endowed with the dowries of the sound, has obtained praise for him, meaning that he is deservedly commended for his discernment in discriminating between the relative value of things and actions.

Display the bridal couplets.—The couplets following in the original are called bridal, *i.e.*, adorned like brides, because all the letters contained therein are dotted, in direct contradistinction from the preceding ones. According to Sherîshi, it was a custom with the ancient Arabs to apply to the cheeks of brides beauty-spots, painted with saffron, and called *nuqaṭ*, pl. of *nuqṭah*, which is also the grammatical term for the diacritical points of letters.

A blessing has been bestowed on thee amongst fawns, as a blessing has been bestowed on yonder olive-tree.—The Arabic text contains here two expressions, which require explanation. The word translated by

fawns is *ṭalâ*, the young of any cloven-hoofed animal, as a cow, a sheep, a gazelle. The olive-tree is designated by *lâ wa lâ* (lit., "neither nor"), suggestive of the passage of the Koran, xxiv. 35: "God is the Light of the Heavens and of the Earth. His Light is like a niche in which is a lamp—the lamp encased in glass—the glass, as it were, a glistening star. From a *blessed tree* it is lighted, *the olive, neither* of the East *nor* of the West (*lâ sharaqîyatun wa-lâ gharabîyatun*), whose oil would well-nigh shine out, even though fire touched it not. It is light upon light!" etc. In illustration of this, it is told that an Arab addressed to Abû Ḥanîfeh the question "With one *wâw* (letter *w* for the conjunction *wa*), or with two *wâws*?" He replied "With two," whereupon the Arab said to him, "A blessing has been bestowed in thee, as a blessing has been bestowed in *lâ wa-lâ*." After he had gone, Abû Ḥanîfeh's disciples asked him what the man's question had meant. Abû Ḥanîfeh answered, "He demanded me whether the profession of faith should be said with two *wâws*, like that of Ibn Mas'ûd, namely, 'I testify that there is no (*lâ*) god but God *and* (first *wâw*) that Mohammed is His servant *and* (second *wâw*) Apostle,' or with one *wâw*, like that of Abû Musá al-A'sharî, to wit, 'I testify that there is no god but God, *and* that Mohammed is his Apostle.' In approval of my decision, he called me blessed, and alluded to the passage of the sacred book on the blessed olive-tree." With regard to the latter a tradition goes, that a man saw the Prophet in a dream, and complained to him of an ailment from which he suffered, whereupon the Prophet said to him: "*have lâ wa lâ.*" Ibn Sîrîn, a celebrated interpreter of dreams (for whom see Ibn Khallikân, i. 635) was consulted on the meaning of these words, and declared it to be "Eat olives" (or olive oil).

O Quṭrub,—which may be translated "O fidget," being the name of a little animal, which is continually on the move, proverbially applied to one who travels much about, and used as a nickname ever since the grammarian Sibawayh called by it Mohammed ibn al-Mustanîr (see Ibn Khallikân, i. 693, and comp. Ar. Prov., i. 643).

Or the likeness of an ivory-doll, allusion to the proverb *aḥsanu mina 'd-dumyati* (*mina 'z-zâni*), more beautiful than a figure or image, both of which, according to Maydâni, mean idols (Ar. Prov., i. 408).

Write down the mongrel couplets, in the original *urqum al-abyâta 'l-al-*

akhyâf, i.e., verses, the alternate words of which consist of dotted and undotted letters in turn. The term *akhyâf* is applied to sons of the same mother by different fathers, or to men of heterogeneous character and condition, and is derived from *khaif*, the quality of having one eye blue and the other black in a horse.

O stiff-neck, O [essence of the] perfume of Mausham, two epithets for bold and mischievous, the first of which, in Arabic *ghashamsham*, is applied to a man of unbending nature, who bows his head to no one, and whom nothing can avert from his purpose. The second alludes to the proverb *ash'amu min 'iṭri mâushamin*, more ill-omened than the perfume of Mausham, the most plausible explanation of which is that Mausham is the name of a woman trading in perfumes, who was surprised and despoiled of her goods by a gang of robbers. When she complained of this to the people of her tribe, they pursued the pillagers, and killed every one on whom they smelled the scent of the perfume. See Ar. Prov., i. 155, 692, where other readings and interpretations will be found.

Kills beholders, in the sense in which the Irish speak of a killing beauty, and in which presently her rounded bosom, or, according to others, her swelling hip, is called a deadly bane for the enamoured admirer.

The two bordered couplets, in the text *al-baitaini 'l-muṭrafaini*, meaning that the beginning and ending of either couplet form a rhyme, and thereby resemble a cloak which is bordered with embroidered designs. Some MSS. read *muṭrifaini*, participle of *aṭrafa*, he produced something novel and wonderful, when the sense would be the two couplets, which fill the hearers with marvel or challenge comparison. A third rendering is *muṭarrafaini*, in allusion to a horse, which is called *muṭarraf* when its head and tail are white.

And are sure not to be matched (lit., abetted or strengthened, *yu'azzazû*) *by a third* is taken from Koran, xxxvi. 13: "When We sent two unto them and they charged them with imposture, therefore *with a third We strengthened them* (*'azzaz-nâ*), and they said, 'Verily we are the Sent unto you of God.'"

Make thee a mark whose traces show fair to sight.—The initial words are in Arabic *sim simatan*, impress a sign (viz., on thy conduct, which in pause would read *sim simah*, in conformity with the final *simsimah*, a grain of sesame or coriander-seed. In similar manner the second

couplet opens with *wa'l-makru mahmâ*, "and fraud or craftiness as far as" (supply "thou art able—do not practise it"), the first four syllables of which are identical in sound with the terminating *wa'l-makrumah*, "and honour, reverence, fair fame amongst men."

O father of despoilment, in Arabic *yâ abâ 'l-ghulûl*.—*Ghul-ûl* is originally the purloining of part of a booty to the detriment of one's companions, and the meaning is here that the beauty of the boy is such, that it pre-eminently captivates the minds of the beholders so as to curtail the legitimate share of his fellow-pupils in the admiration due to them.

O cymbal-beater of the troop (*yâ ṣannâjata 'l-jaishi*).—The Persian *sanj*, cymbal, has furnished Arabic with the word *ṣannâj*, a cymbal-beater, which in the form *ṣannâjah* with the feminine termination of intensity occurs in the nickname by which one of the bards of the Ḥamâseh, A'shá Kays, is known as *sannâjatu 'l-'arab*, on account of his facundity as an orator and poet.

Well done, O thou mite, thou eye of a fly.—In default of a better equivalent, I translate with "mite" the Arabic *ḥibiqqah* (according to Sherîshi, a fart), which is used in taunting a man with his diminutive size. Other authorities say it means long or lanky, but this would scarcely tally with the following "eye of a fly," another playful and endearing term, indicating excessive smallness of person, which Tradition puts into the mouth of Mohammed, when dandling his grandsons, al Ḥasan and al-Ḥosayn.

Saying to him: I commend thee to the protection of Allah from the eye of the envier, and fain would be made thy ransom.—This is, of necessity, the ponderous paraphrase of *'auwaẓa-hu wa faddâ-hu*, second form of the verbs *'auẓ* and *fadá* respectively, which means to pronounce the formulas translated above in full.

O Ḳa'ḳâ', a male proper name, for an instance of which see vol. i., p. 471, and the etymological explanation of which is disputed. Of the various meanings assigned to it, here that of "loud-voiced" seems the most appropriate, since it is said of the boy that he recited his verses in a high-pitched key. The following "*O thou bird cautious as to where thou sippest water*," in Arabic *yâ bâqi'ata 'l-baqâ'i*, lit., "O crafty bird of the water-pools," alludes to the proverb (Ar. Prov., i. 162), mentioned and explained vol. i., p. 318.

Brighter than the fire of hospitality to the eyes of the son of night-faring. Another proverbial saying, for which see Ar. Prov., i. 408.

Thou who askest me about the two letters Ẓâd and Ẓâ.—For the reason stated in the epitome to this Assembly, I restrict myself to giving here the remainder of this long string of words without regard to versification, together with their English equivalents. They are *muvâẓib*, one who persists in; *intiẓâr*, expectation; *ilẓaẓ*, importunity; *waẓîf*, thinnest part of the leg of a horse or camel; *ẓâliʿ*, crooked; *ʿaẓîm*, great; *ẓâhir*, helper; *faẓẓ*, water in a camel's stomach (also harsh, cruel); *ighlâẓ*, rough treatment; *naẓîf*, clean, tidy, neat; *ẓarf*, a vessel; *ẓalaf*, continence; *ẓâhir*, evident; *faẓiʿ*, sweet water (also ugly, difficult); *wuʿʿâẓ*, preachers; *ʿukâẓ*, place of the annual fair between Mecca and Tâʿif, the name being derived from the verb *ʿakẓ*, in the sense of thronging together; *ẓaʿn*, travelling; *maẓẓ*, wild pomegranate; *ḥanẓal*, colocynth; *qâriẓân*, the two tan-gatherers (see p. 6 above); *aushâẓ*, pl. of *washîẓ*, mixed crowd, rabble; *ẓirâb*, hillocks; *ẓirrân*, sharp stones; *shaẓaf*, distress; *bâhiẓ*, heavy to bear, oppressive; *jaʿẓarî*, boaster, vainglorious; *jawwâẓ*, profligate (also gluttonous); *ẓarâbîn*, pole-cats; *ḥanâẓib*, male beetles; *ʿunẓub*, male locust; *ẓayyân*, wild jessamine; *ruʿẓ*, hole in a spear or arrow to fix the head in; *shanaẓî*, surroundings of a mountain; *dalẓ*, pushing back; *ẓâb* (*ẓâm*), clamour, noise (also brother-in-law); *ẓabẓâb*, ailment; *ʿunẓuwân*, a saline plant; *jinʿâẓ*, fool; *shinẓîr*, ill-tempered; *taʿâẓul*, hanging together of locusts or dogs in copulation; *iẓlim*, indigo; *baẓr*, clitoris; *inʿâẓ*, erection. With the exception of a few more words of exceedingly rare occurrence, this list is said to be complete, and cognate forms are, of course, as far as the letter *ẓâ* is concerned, spelt alike, for instance, *qaiẓ*, excessive heat, and *qâẓû*, they were hot, etc.

May thy mouth never be harmed.—Thus Chenery translates (vol. i., p. 183, last line but one) the idiom *lâ fuẓẓa fû-ka*, which also occurs in the fourteenth Assembly. The literal rendering would be, "may thy mouth not be broken," where mouth is said to stand for "teeth." The expression was, according to Tradition, used by Mohammed, when the poet Nâbighah recited to him his ḳaṣîdeh in the letter Râ, terminating in the lines:

"We have reached the summit in praise, and glory and lordship, yet we hope to attain to a station even above this."

"Whither to, O father of Lailá?" asked the Prophet, and on the poet's answer, "to Paradise," he said to him approvingly: "*lá afẓaẓa 'llâhu fâ-ka*," "may Allah not harm thy mouth." The substitution of "teeth" for "mouth," in the interpretation of the commentators, is in congruity with the original meaning of the verb *faẓẓ*, "breaking a seal."

A safer keeper than the earth, alluding to the proverb: *aḥfaẓu mina 'l-arẓi wa aktamu wa âmanu*, "more keeping and more concealing and more trusty than the earth," because it keeps safely what is buried in it of wealth, etc., like a custodian, and pays back what is confided to it like a trustee, and on account of the saying "speak not ill of the dead, so that the earth may not shield him better than thou."

Therefore remember me: I will remember you; and render thanks to me, and be not ungrateful to me—quotation from Koran, ii. 147.

But I was like one who tries to see in the dark, etc.—My translation follows here the reading of my own MS.: *wa ana*, "but I," or of the native editions: *wa kuntu*, "but I was," instead of that of De Sacy: "*wa huwa*, "but he," which seems to me an evident misprint or slip of the pen, overlooked by the editors of the 2nd edition.

Than one who speaks from experience, in Arabic *miṣlu khabîrin*. Compare Koran, xxxv. 15: "If ye cry to them (the false gods), they hear not your cry, and if they heard they would not answer you; and in the day of Resurrection they will disown your joining them with God. *And none can instruct thee like Him who is informed (khabîr) of all.*"

Thou art the son of the days, i.e., well acquainted with their conditions and proof against their vicissitudes, as we would say "a thorough man of the world."

THE FORTY-SEVENTH ASSEMBLY.

While I was staying at Ḥajr of Yemâmeh.—Yemâmeh is one of the most fertile districts of Ḥijâz, and at the same time the name of its chief town, situated in the east of Mecca. It has been mentioned in Assembly XL., p. 103, above, as the scene of the Musaylimeh's insurrection under the Khalifate of Abû Bekr, which was

crushed by a sanguinary battle, in which the impostor himself was slain. The Shuhadâ', or martyrs on the Moslem side, were buried in Ḥajr, the second town of importance in the district, about two days' journey distant from Yemâmah town to the north-west.

Or met with accident (lit., *state, condition*) *after accident*, in Arabic *rakiba ṭabaqan ʿan ṭabaqin*, where the preposition *ʿan*, from, takes the meaning of *baʿda*, after, as in Koran, lxxxiv. 19: "(And I swear, etc.) that state after state ye will encounter."

Who has disappointed his master, lit., who is a burden (*kall*) to his master, again taken from the Koran, xvi. 78: "God also propounds a comparison between two men, one of whom is dumb, and hath no power over anything, and is *a burden to his lord* (*wa huwa kallun ʿalá maulâ-hu*): direct him where he will, he cometh not back with success."

Is this the tardiness of Find along with the failure of thy fire-shaft? —This is meant as a reproach for being late on his errand, and, after all, returning without having accomplished it. The allusion is to the proverb *abṭaʾa min findin*, "slower than Find," a freedman of ʿÂyeshah bint Saʿd, who sent him one day to fetch fire from a neighbour's house. On his way he met some people who were travelling to Egypt, and, joining them, he stayed away for a whole year. After his return, he borrowed the fire-brand for which he had been sent, and ran home with it, but he stumbled and fell, and the fire got extinguished, whereupon he exclaimed, "Hurry be cursed!" (Ar. Prov., i. 197, 236).

More busily engaged than the woman of the two butter-bags, in the original *ashghalu min ẓâti ʾn-niḥyaini*, a proverb of which Ḥarîri himself gives the following account: She was a woman of the tribe Taim Allâh ibn Ṣaʿlabah, who was present at the fair of ʿOkâz with two butter-bags. Khauwât ibn Jubair (who afterwards was converted and became one of the Helpers or Anṣârîs) took her aside under the pretext of buying them, opened them, tasted the contents, and returned them to her one after the other, and while she was holding them under her arms and kept their mouths closed with her hands, he outraged her. When he went away from her, she said to him: "May it do thee no good." As for the tribal name Taim Allah, it is a corruption of Taim al-Lât, servant of Lât, an idol of the time of Ignorance, for which the religious ardour of the Faithful

substituted the name of the true God in their anxiety to eliminate all traces of paganism from their early history. The comparative *ashghalu* is another instance of the measure *af'al*, derived from *maf'ûl* instead of *fâ'il*, for which comp. the note on *aḥmad*, p. 283, above (Ar. Prov., i., 463, 687).

There is no blame on him who goes to the privy.—Sherîshi here inserts the story of the youth of Kufa, who visited an uncle of his at Medina, and during a year's stay was never known to enter that place. When he had returned to his home, it came out on inquiry, that whenever he had asked his uncle's slave girls for it by one of the numerous names by which it is more or less euphemistically called by the Arabs, they answered him by a verse of some popular poem, in which the same word occurred with a different and perfectly guileless meaning, leaving the poor lad no wiser than before, and throwing him mercilessly back on his own resources for expedients, to which he took with a vengeance.

A youth like Ṣamṣâmah, i.e., straight and sharp like a sword. According to Sherîshi, Ṣamṣâmah is in particular the name of a sword belonging to 'Amr Mad'ákarib, the sharpness of which was such as to cut iron as easily as iron cuts wood.

Nor seek traces after the substance is gone.—Comp. Ar. Prov., i. 221, and Chenery's note, vol. i., p. 362.

He frowned and he turned his back, beginning of Sura lxxx., to which Rodwell remarks in a note: "We are told in the traditions that, when engaged in converse with Welid, a chief man among the Koraysh, Mohammed was interrupted by the blind Abdallah Ibn Omm Maktûm, who asked to hear the Koran. The Prophet spoke very roughly to him at the time, but afterwards repented, and treated him ever after with the greatest respect. So much so that he twice made him Governor of Medina."

So trust to the stream of my mountain-slope, i.e., to my word and promise. If no confidence is felt in the sincerity of a man's protestations, it is said to him, "I trust not in thy mountain-slope" (*lâ aṣiqu bi-tal'ati-ka*), viz., that any water will flow down from it, the water, as has been mentioned frequently, serving as a simile for liberality and generous disposition (Ar. Prov., i. 49). The expression *tal'ah*, lit., a rising ground, or the watercourse down from a mountain, occurs also in the proverb: "I am afraid of nothing but

the current from my mountain-slope," meaning thereby one's nearest relations.

Where the wolf howls, metaphorical for a deserted place, a "howling" wilderness.

If thy father had lorded it over 'Abd Manâf, or if 'Abd al-Madân had been thrall to thy maternal uncle.—'Abd Manâf, surnamed al-Mughairah, was the eldest son of Kosṣai, and one of the most famous chiefs of the tribe Koraysh, for whose glory, as the Commentators remark, it would suffice that he belonged to the ancestors of Mohammed. 'Abd al-Madân was proverbial for nobility and prowess in warfare. The poet Laqîṭ alludes to him in the line:

"I drank wine until I fancied myself to be 'Abd al-Madân or Abû Kâbûs."

Beat not cold iron, from the proverb "thou beatest cold iron" (Ar. Prov., i. 218), which is applied to one who wishes for something unattainable. Al-Mubarrid quotes the following verses of Abû 'sh-Shamaqmaq on Sa'îd Ibn Salm:

"Alas! thou beatest cold iron if thou wishest for a gift from Sa'id;
By Allah, if he were possessed of all the seas together and a Moslem came to him in the time of flood
Begging from him a draught to perform his ablution, he would deny it to him and say, Make thy ablution with the sand of the ground."

The nose in the sky and the rump in the water, proverbially said of a grandiloquous boaster whose performances are poor (Ar. Prov., i. 23).

And art ruthless with the ruthlessness of the cat, allusion to the proverb *a'aqqu mina 'l-hirri*, more ruthless than the cat, who is said, like the hyena, occasionally to devour her young. It was applied by a poet amongst the partisans of Ali to 'Âyeshah, when she set out for the battle of the camel. As I have a tender corner in my heart for this animal, which I consider much maligned by those who call it devoid of affection, I gladly take note of the statement of Ḥamzah Al Iṣbahânî, that the Arabs say also, in flat contradiction to the above, "more affectionate (*abarru*) than the cat," maintaining that the devouring, if it is done now and then, proceeds from pure excess of love, in order to preserve the little ones from all future trouble. It is true he adds that they offer no satisfactory argument in proof, but then he ought to repeat their arguments, such as they

are, and allow us to form our own judgment. Meanwhile I am fain to credit the soundness of their saying and solemnly declare on behalf of my four-footed friends: "Well said, ye Arabs, faithful believers in feline kindliness, who deserve for aye to live in the grateful remembrance of the tribe of Puss, son of Grimalkin, son of Caterwauler."

Less occupied than the cupper of Sâbâṭ (Ar. Prov., ii. 227).—The tale goes that for want of customers he cupped soldiers for a dâniq (small fraction of the dirhem) apiece, payable at their convenience, and when for some length of time none presented himself, he practised on his mother, so as not to be reproached with idleness, until her blood was exhausted, and the poor lady died of inanition.

Heavy of hand.—Here I have taken a liberty with the words of the text, *ṣaqîlu-'l-ishtirâṭi*, the literal translation of which would be "heavy in making stipulations." But as this would come pretty much to the same as the preceding "excessive in his charges," I hope the substitution will be condoned, while it introduces a fresh item into the description of what a cupper ought not to be.

That he was complaining to one who would not silence his complaint, a proverbial expression applying to a person who is not concerned at another's condition, and does not care for the removal of his complaint, for if he alleviated it, the other would cease complaining (see Ar. Prov., i. 219). Thus a poet says, addressing his camel:

"Thou complainest to one who will not still thy complaint; so bear thy heavy burden patiently or die."

Of a similar purport is the proverb which will follow a little lower down: *hâna 'alá 'l-amlasi mâ lâqá 'd-dabira*, "what befalls the back-sore sits lightly on the smooth-skinned" (Ar. Prov., i. 653).

His sleeve became torn, literally, his sleeve recited the Sura *inshiqâq*, the splitting asunder (lxxxiv.), the sound of the tearing garment being whimsically compared to the sound of a reading voice.

Hast thou not heard what is said of him who exercises forgiveness?—Allusion to a saying reported by Tradition of Mohammed: "He who remits the offence of a believer, Allah will remit to the same his offence on the day of resurrection."

My surroundings over-tax my liberality, meaning, that his household expenditure leaves him no surplus, which he might spend on others. The Arabic for surroundings is *shi'âb*, pl. of *shi'b*, a mountain cleft

or valley, here used in the sense of *nawâḥî*, neighbouring parts, for family, etc.

They are of no account, even though he should be a liar, in Arabic *lâ kânâ wa lau kâna ẓâ mainin*, lit., the two have not been, even if he be possessed of lying, which a marginal note in my MS. paraphrases by: "There is no value in the two dirhems, even if the old man should have told a lie."

A milk-flow, half of which belongs to thee, taken from the proverb: *uḥlub ḥalaban la-ka shaṭru-hu*, milk the milk of which half shall be thine, inciting to the pursuit of an object by the promise of an equal share in the result (Ar. Prov., i. 345).

As nicely as the fruit of the dwarf-palm splits, in Arabic *shiqqa 'l-ublumati* (also read *ablimati* and *ablamati*).—According to Sherîshi *ublumah* is synonymous with *daumah*, wild or dwarf palm, whose leaves split into two equal halves. Abû Ziyâd says it is a plant growing horn-shaped fruits like beans, and which splits lengthwise in two halves of perfect equality. Hence the proverb: *al-mâlu bainî wa baina-ka shiqqa 'l-ublumati*, the money is or shall be equally divided between myself and thee, where the accusative *shiqqâ* is that of the infinitive of corroboration, *i.e.*, divided with the splitting, etc. (Ar. Prov., ii. 618).

Any shoe suits the bare-footed who walks on flints, said of one who adapts himself to the circumstances as best he can (Ar. Prov., ii. 317).

THE FORTY-EIGHTH ASSEMBLY.

That He would let me alight in her, in Arabic *yumṭiyanî qarâ-hâ*, lit., would make me bestride her back.

Abû munẓir had called out his admonition to the sleepers.—Abû munzir, the father of the admonisher, is a nickname of the cock, because he exhorts the sleepers to rise for prayer, which idea I preserve in adding the supplementary words "his admonition" to the translation of the verb *hatafa*, "he had called out." De Sacy quotes here a tradition, reported by Abû Hurayrah, according to which Mohammed used to say: "When ye hear the cocks crow they have seen an angel: so ask Allah for His bounty; but when you

hear the braying of asses, they have seen a Satan: so take refuge with Allah from Satan, the stoned."

One all wrapped up in signs of the twice-read chapter, the other charmed by tunes of the strings twice twisted.—The couplet, and those which follow in connection with the preceding expression, "holy things and worldly," in Arabic *dîn wa dunyâ*, lit., religion and world, offer an instance of the rhetorical figure *tasfîr*, which is closely related to that called *laff wa nashr*, and for the benefit of the student, both may here be illustrated together. The latter one means verbally "rolling up and unfolding," and an example of it has occurred in Assembly XXX., p. 30, above, in the line:

"And her sons and their abodes are lustrous stars and astral mansions."

It consists in the juxtaposition of two nouns, here "sons" and "abodes," which are followed by two joined attributes or predicates, here "stars" and "astral mansions," leaving it to the discernment of the hearer to refer either of them to the proper subject. Similarly we read in the Koran, xxviii. 73: "Of His mercy He hath made for you the night and the day that ye may take your rest in it, and that ye may seek what ye need out of His bounteous supplies," where Rodwell himself has made the adjustment which the text reserves to the reader in translating: "the night that ye may take your rest in it, and the day that ye may seek," etc. *Tafsîr*, on the other hand, which in a more general sense means commentary, in particular of the Koran, in the present special signification, consists in enouncing a word or several words, and then, on the supposition that they want an explanation, supplementing such explanation in the sequel of one's speech. Thus, Koran, xi. 107-110 says: "When that day shall come no one shall speak a word but by His leave, and *some shall be miserable and others blessed.* And as for those who shall be *consigned to misery*—their place therefore the Fire! their lot therein sighing and moaning!—Therein they abide while the Heavens and the Earth endure, unless thy Lord shall will it otherwise; verily thy Lord is the mighty worker of His will. And *as for the blessed ones*—their place therefore the Garden! therein they abide as the Heavens and the Earth endure, unless thy Lord shall will otherwise an uninterrupted boon." A more complicated instance is contained in the following verses of Ibn Ar Rûmî:

"Your views, your faces, your swords, when calamities gloom, are stars:
Therein they are road-signs for guidance, and lamps that light up the darkness, and lastly showering missiles,"

meaning that their counsels lead their people to success, as the stars guide the wanderer in the desert, that their faces resemble the stars in cheering brightness, and that their swords bring destruction on the enemy, as the stars are hurled against the listening Satans. In the passage of our text "signs" (*âyât*) is the well known term for Koranic verses. "The twice-read chapter" and "the strings twice twisted" are in Arabic *maṣânî*, for which, in the former sense, see vol. i., p. 301, and in the latter signification compare Assembly XXI., *ibid.*, p. 228: "I charm as charm not the triple-twisted strings."

How many there who wear their eyes by reading, or wear their trays by feeding the needy stranger.—In the original this runs: *wa kam min qâri'in fi-hâ wa qârin aẓarrâ bi 'l-jufâni wa bi 'l-jifâni*, lit., how many a reader is therein, and how many an entertainer, who spoil their eyelids (*pars pro toto* for the eyes), and their platters; another instance of the figure *laff wa nashr*, described in the preceding note: these two nouns "reader" and "entertainer" are qualified by the statement that by excessive indulgence in their favourite pursuit they damage their sight and their substance respectively. My translation follows here, for the sake of greater clearness, the example set by Rodwell in rendering the above-quoted passage of the Koran.

At sundown, in Arabic, *'inda dulûki barâḥi.—Dulûk*, for the setting of the sun, occurs in the Koran, xvii. 81: "Observe prayer at sunset, till the first darkening of the night" (*li-dulûki 'sh-shamsi*), and *barâḥi* is a nickname of the sun, undeclinable in *kasrah* (*i*) like Ḥaẓâmi, *laqab* of Zarḳâ' Al Yemâmeh, on account of the sharpness of her eyesight, from the verb *ḥaẓm*, to cut.

The discussion on interchangeable letters, i.e., the letters which in certain dialects can take each other's place, as *a* and *w* in *aḥad*, for *waḥad*, one; *ṯ* and *s* in *nâṯ* for *nâs*, men; *f* and *ṣ* in *jada* for *jadad*, tomb; *j* and *y* in *'ashijj* for *'ashiyy*, evening; *ḥ* and *ḫ* in *ẓaḥl* for *ẓaḫl*, a small quantity of water; *ḫ* and *ḵẖ* in *ḫamṣ* for *ḵẖamṣ*, the subsiding of a wound.

As the snatching of a firebrand of one in haste, a proverbial expression for time that passes quickly or for speed. A poet says:

"And many a visitor whose visit is no visit, as though he had come to borrow fire" (see Ar. Prov., ii. 344).

The loops were loosed for standing up, in Arabic, *ḥullati 'l-ḥubá li 'l-qiyâmi*.—To loose the loops is in itself a metaphor for rising, as has been shown vol. i., p. 412. Here the word *qiyâm*, rising, is added because it is used in the technical sense of standing up for prayer, in conformity with the injunction of the Koran, ii. 239: "Observe strictly the prayers, and the middle prayer, and *stand up with devotion before God* (*qûmû li 'llâhi qâtinîna*)." *Qâtin*, translated "with devotion," is active participle of the verbal noun *qunût*, occurring in the next sentence, the original meaning of which is *sukût*, silence, according to the traditionist Zayd ibn Arkam, who relates: "We used to converse during prayer, until the words of Allah *qûmu li 'llâhi qâtinîna*, rise to Allah in silence, were revealed."

The facundity of al-Ḥasan, for whom see the Notes to Assembly XL., p. 247, above.

Whom I have taken for my intimates and confidants (*karishî wa 'aibatî*), lit., for my stomach and wardrobe, *karish* being the stomach of a ruminant, and *'aiḅah*, a travelling trunk or cloth-press. The meaning is therefore, whom I have made the recipients of my affections and the depositories of my secrets, and the pithy expression is said to originate with Mohammed, who applied it to his companions.

That religion consists in the sincerity of advice, allusion to the traditional saying of Mohammed: "Religion is the imparting of sound counsel."

Of whom it is said "No ill-fate has he who sits with them," referring to the proverb (Ar. Prov., ii. 540) mentioned vol. i., p. 471: "No ill-fate has he who sits with Al Ḳa'ḳâ'," since it was his custom, as Chenery adds, to relieve all who visited him.

But my misleading soul . . . prompted me, in Arabic *fa-sauwalat liya 'n-nafsu 'l-muzillatu*, an idiom borrowed from Koran, xii. 18: "And they brought his (Joseph's) shirt with false blood upon it. He said: Nay, your own minds have contrived this affair" (lit., your own souls have prompted to you a thing, *sauwalat la-kum anfusu-kum amran*).

To be boon-companion to the mighty topers, and to pass round the tankards.—The translation "mighty topers," for *abṭâl*, literally, "a

valiant man," is founded on Sherishi's explanation that it means here *fursânu 'l-khalâ'ah*, knights of debauchery or profligates. The tankards, *arṭâl*, are, according to the same commentator, the four of which Abû Nuwâs speaks in the lines:

"I found the tempers of men to be four originally, therefore four to the four, to each temper a tankard."

On the fifth day . . . and during its sacred night, in the text *fi yaumi 'l-khamîsi . . . wa fi 'l-laitati 'l-gharrâ'i*, on the fifth day, the day of *jum'ah*, also called *al-yaumu 'l-azhar*, the resplendent day, and in the bright night, *i.e.*, the night of Friday. Both expressions are taken from the Tradition: "increase your prayers on the resplendent day and in the bright night."

When he had satisfied his need, in Arabic *lammâ qaḍâ 'l-waṭara*, alluding to Koran, xxxiii. 37, where, however, the context requires the slightly altered translation: "And when Zayd *had settled the necessary matter* of her divorce," etc.

Though I spoke this in strains of verse, yet my speech leads aright and true, a stricture on the poets, in the sense of Koran, xxvi. 224-226: "It is the poets whom the erring follow: Seest thou not how they rove distraught in every valley? And that they say that which they do not?"

On the spot, in the text *'alá 'l-hâfirah*, lit., on the ground which the hoofs of horses have dug, taken from the proverbial phrase, on bargaining for a horse: *an-naqdu 'inda 'l-ḥâfirah*, the meaning of which is "ready money to begin with." From the signification "beginning" the word passes to that of initial condition, as in Koran, lxxix. 10: "The infidels will say, Shall we indeed be restored to the former state?"

THE FORTY-NINTH ASSEMBLY.

When he had neared ninety-three years, lit., the fist, *al-qabḍah*, which, in the method of calculation carried on by the hand and fingers, indicates the said number. Others explain the word by "the grip of death."

For one like thee it needs no tapping with the staff, nor an awakening by the throw of pebbles.—This alludes to the proverb: "The staff is not

knocked to the ground for him, nor are pebbles thrown for him" (Ar. Prov., ii. 343), which is applied to one experienced and wide awake. The first part of it refers to 'Âmir ibn az-Zarab, a judge in the time of ignorance, who, when he had reached a great old age, committed errors in his decisions, so that people began to doubt him. This came to the knowledge of his daughter, and she remonstrated with him, whereupon he enjoined on her to tap with his staff on the floor whenever she noticed that his wits were beginning to wander, in order to call his mind back to the point. The throwing of pebbles is originally a kind of vaticination from the figures which they form when shaken and cast on the ground. Here, however, allusion is made to a custom of the Arabs, when they wished to test the fitness of a man for participating in a journey or a raid. They left him by himself, until he had fallen asleep, when one of them took up a small pebble and threw it in his direction. If the faint sound awoke him, they trusted him, but if not, they would have nothing to say to him. More on the subject will be found in the passage of Maydâni, quoted above, and *ibid.*, i. 55, but it would here be out of place as irrelevant for the explanation of the context.

He has been called upon to give warning, allusion to Koran, li. 55: "Yet warn them, for, in truth, the warning will profit the believers."

That which Seth bequeathed not to Nabaṭ, viz., something better than it, a form of expression for which comp. vol. i., 304, the note: "*With an earliness beyond the earliness of the crow.*"—Nabaṭ is a collective noun for the Nabateans, who, according to the commentators, were the descendants of Seth, thus called because they inhabited the lowlands between the two Iraks, which abounded in water (*nabṭ*).

Nor Jacob to the tribes (*asbâṭ*), *i.e.*, to the twelve patriarchs, his sons, as the progenitors of the Jewish tribes. His behest to them is recorded as follows in the Koran, ii. 126: "And this to his children did Abraham enjoin, and Jacob also, saying: O my children! truly God has chosen a religion for you; so die not without having become Moslems."

Thy smoke will arise aloft, *i.e.*, thou wilt be able to kindle the fires of hospitality, and akin to the idiom "he whose ashes are heaped up or plentiful," for which see p. 274, above, and the opposite of which occurs in the next *qarînah* but one.

The means of livelihood are ministry (imârah), and commerce (tijârah), and husbandry (ziṛâ'ah), and handicraft (ṣinâ'ah)—a division which broadly coincides with the popular German classification of the four social orders: Wehrstand (order of warding off for civil and military government), Mehrstand (order of making more, for commerce as increasing the wealth of the nation), Nährstand (order of providing nourishment, for agriculture), and Lehrstand (order of teaching, for the learned and technical professions).

Like the entanglements of dreams, allusion to Koran, xii. 44: "They said: They are confused dreams (*aẓghâṯu aḥlâmin*, confusions of dreams), nor have we knowledge in interpretation of dreams."

The bitterness of being weaned therefrom, meaning of being dismissed from office, neatly expressed in the line of a poet:

"The intoxication of power is pleasant, but the state that follows is bitter exceedingly."

Similarly a proverb says: "Command is sweet to suckle, but bitter to be weaned of" (Ar. Prov., i. 145).

They are subject to risks, in Arabic *'urẓutun li 'l-mukhâṭarâti*, the word *'urẓah* being synonymous with *nuṣb*, butt, target, object to be aimed at, as Koran, ii. 225: "And swear not by God that ye will be virtuous and fear God," the lit. translation of which Rodwell gives in a note as: "Make not Allah the scope for your oaths." As for the dangers to which merchandise is exposed, Tradition records the saying of Mohammed: "Verily the traveller and his goods are at the very brink of destruction (*'alâ qalatin*), save that which Allah takes under His protection."

Easy to win, lit., cold of booty, said of spoil which is obtained without exposing one's self to the heat of battle or exertion.

To the sons of dust, i.e., the poor, in Arabic *li-banî ghabrâ'a*, so called because the ground is their bed, without pillow or cover. In the 55th verse of Ṭarafeh's Mo'allakah they are opposed to the "owners of the wide-spread leather tent," meaning the rich, who enjoy every comfort and luxury (see Arnold's edition, p. 54).

Who rises and sits down again, i.e., who demeans himself with impotent and uncontrollable anger.

Wheresoever they alight they pick up, a proverb, for which see Maydâni, i. 416.

Thou hast stitched together, but not ripped open, in the vernacular idiom *rataqta wa mâ fataqta*, for thou hast summarised in thy speech, but not entered into details or particulars.

From which end the shoulder is to be eaten, allusion to the proverb: "He knows from where the shoulder is eaten," applied to the sharp-sighted and experienced, who is well aware how a difficult matter is to be treated in the most efficacious manner (see Ar. Prov., i. 63; ii. 144). Aṣma'î mentions that the Arabs say of a man of weak intellect, "He does not eat the shoulder neatly," and quotes the verse:

"I know, in spite of what you see in me of old age, from which end the shoulder must be tackled,"

i.e., I am in the full possession of my senses.

Be more on the move than the Quṭrub.—For this and the following popular sayings as far as "more aggressive than the wolf that plays the tiger," see the proverbs: *ajwalu min quṭrubin* (Ar. Prov., i. 329; i. 643); *asrá min jarâdin* (*ibid.*, i. 463); *anshaṭu min ẓabyin muqmirin* (*ibid.*, ii. 184, 788); *aslaṭu min ẓi'bin mutanammirin* (*ibid.*, i. 641).

Let down thy bucket into every fountain, taken from the proverb *adli dalwa-ka fî 'l-dilâ'i*, let down thy bucket among the buckets, for which see l.c., ii. 436, and the note in vol. i., p. 402.

With the earliness of the raven, and the boldness of the lion.—The raven, or crow, is called in the text *abû ẓâjir*, father of the scarer, because he is roused by shouting, to take augury from the direction of his flight, and he is proverbial for earliness (see vol. i., p. 304). The name given to the lion is *abû ḥâriṣ*, father of the prey-winner, because he is the most powerful of wild beasts for securing his prey, and he has given rise to the proverb: "Bolder than the bearer of the mane" (Ar. Prov., i. 329, 334, 335).

The caution of the chameleon, here called *abû qurrah*, father of coolness, with reference to the proverb "Colder than the eye of the chameleon," for which see p. 273, above. The reason for its being proverbial for cautiousness has been mentioned in a note to Assembly XXXVI., on p. 222. The *kinyehs*, or nicknames, used in the sequel of the passage are *abû ja'dah* for *wolf*, which is explained in various ways, the most probable being that *ja'dah* is here synonymous with

rakhl, lamb, the wolf's favourite tit-bit; the proverbs concerning him are to be found in the Majma', i. 464, 637; ii. 151, 191. *Abû 'uqbah*, father of (numerous) progeny, for *pig*, concerning whose greed the following anecdote is recorded of Buzurjmirh (see Kalilah wa Dimnah, p. 9): he was asked "By what means hast thou obtained thy successes?" and answered, "By earliness like the earliness of the crow, and eagerness like the eagerness [covetousness] of the pig, and patience like the patience of the ass." *Abû wassâb*, father of the leaper, for gazelle, the proverb with regard to whose nimbleness has been quoted on the preceding page. *Abû 'l-ḥuṣain*, father of the little castle, for *fox*, on account of his elaborately-constructed hole, or the cunning manner in which he protects himself, proverbial for deceitfulness, stealth, and craftiness (Ar. Prov., i. 577). *Abû aiyûb*, father of Job, for *camel*, proverbial for endurance (Ar. Prov., i. 737). *Abû ghazawân*, father of warfare, viz., against rats and mice, for *cat*, anent whom De Sacy's commentary here quotes again the proverb recorded p. 293, above, "More affectionate than the cat," and mentions the following saying of Ibn al-Mukaffa': "I have adopted from everything that which is most beauteous in it, as from the pig its eagerness for that which is good for it and its earliness in providing for its needs, from the dog his sensibleness and watchfulness, from the cat the insinuating gentleness of its purr, its quickness in seizing its opportunity for game, and its pretty ways of asking," the last of which accomplishments Sherîshi describes with all the glee of an appreciative observer and connoisseur. *Abû barâqish*, for a bird, probably of the heron kind, for which I substitute the hummingbird, because it is the variegation of its plumage which forms its characteristic, and has occasioned its figurative use to designate a person of variable disposition (see Ar. Prov., i. 409, and comp. vol. i., bottom of p. 477).

Inquire after the state of the market before bringing thy goods to it.—This and the following idioms are amplifications of the proverb (ii. 259): "Before shooting arrows let the quivers be full," to the effect that one ought to make all necessary preparations before engaging in an important undertaking.

And despair not of the mercy of Allah, taken from Koran, xii. 87: "Go, my sons, and seek tidings of Joseph and his brother, and

despair not of God's mercy (*rauḥ*), verily none but the unbelieving despair of the mercy of God."

Promises have their reversals, in Arabic (*li 'l-'idâti mua'qqibâtin*, objective case dependent on the preceding *inna*), allusion to Koran, xiii. 41: "And if God pronounces a doom, there is none *to reverse* (*mu'aqqib*) His doom, and swift is He to take account."

Display then the patience of those endowed with firmness, an expression borrowed from Koran, xlvi. 34: "Bear thou up, then, with patience, as did the Apostles *endued with firmness*," and applying, according to the most trustworthy interpretation, to Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus.

Hold not thy hand tied to thy neck, etc., quotation from the same, xvii. 31: "And let not thy hand be tied up to thy neck; nor yet open it with all openness, lest thou sit thee down in rebuke, in beggary."

And gratified with poor fruit and bad measure, proverbially applied to one who meets with two evils or calamities. Aṣma'î relates that Abû Ja'far al-Manṣûr encountered an Arab in Syria, and said to him: "Praise be to God that He took from you the plague under our government." The prompt reply was: "Allah does not bestow on us at the same time poor fruit and bad measure, to wit, your government and the plague" (Ar. Prov., i. 368).

For the neighbour before the house, and the fellow-traveller before setting out on the road, two popular sayings of self-evident meaning, for which see Ar. Prov., i. 368.

If I be spared after thee—but may I never taste thy loss, a figure of speech, called by grammarians *ḥashw*, parenthesis, as in Koran, lvi. 74, 75: "And I swear by the places where the stars do set,—And that is surely a great oath if ye only knew it."

How like is the night to yesternight, i.e., how like is the son to the father (Ar. Prov., ii. 615). This proverb, expressive of perfect equality, is said to originate with the following couplets, ascribed to Ṭarafeh, although they are not to be found in his dîwân:

"Every familiar I have treated with true friendship, but as for them, may Allah not leave them a tooth to show in their smile,
All of them are falser than the fox, how like is the night to yesternight."

"A tooth to show in their smile" is a paraphrase of the Arabic

wâḍiḥah, which is explained as a tooth that becomes visible in laughing, and the phrase itself is a counterpart of the idiom "may thy mouth not be harmed," mentioned in the notes to Assembly XLVI., p. 289, above.

He who resembles his father does not go wrong, a proverb the meaning of which is, "he misplaces not his resemblance, because none is worthier of the son's likeness than the father." Its origin is ascribed to the line of Ka'b ibn Zohayr:

"I am the son of one who has never opposed me in his life heretofore, and he who is like his father does not go wrong" (Ar. Prov., ii. 665).

Above the mandates of Lokman, the Sage, after whom Sura xxxi. of the Koran is named, to the title of which Rodwell remarks: "The opinion most generally received is that Lokman is the same person whom the Greeks, not knowing his real name, have called Æsop, *i.e.*, Æthiops."

THE FIFTIETH ASSEMBLY.

Not engaged in children's business, lit., whose children were not called upon. This proverbial expression is variously interpreted, but the most satisfactory explanation seems to be that of Abû 'Obaydeh, who says it is applied to an affair of great importance, to which no children are summoned, but only their elders. It appears, however, from various quotations in De Sacy's commentary, that in course of time the original meaning of the phrase has been forgotten, and that it has been joined to any noun, in order to emphasize the idea contained in it. For instance, *tûbah*, "repentance," followed by *lâ yunâdâ walîdu-hâ*, lit., "whose child is not called upon," would signify a repentance of intense acuteness (see Ar. Prov., ii. 895).

Heedless of knocks and pushes, in Arabic *ughẓî li 'l-lâkizi wa 'l-wâkizi*, "conniving at him who strikes with his fist and him who pushes aside."

She boasts of them the straightest kiblah, for it is stated that the kiblah for the people of Baṣra, that is to say, the direction to be observed by them in prayer, points exactly to the door of the Ka'beh.

Opposite the portal and the station, *i.e.*, the door of the Ka'beh (see

the preceding note) and the structure which is called the station of Abraham, and for which see the article "Maqûmu Ibrahîm" in the "Dictionary of Islâm," p. 313.

One of the two wings of the world, alluding to a saying attributed to Abû Hurayrah, that the world represents the shape of a bird, whose wings are Baṣra and Cairo, and that, if those two were destroyed, a general downfall would ensue. Others say: "The world is a bird, with Baṣra and Kufa for its wings, Khorasan for its breast, Transoxania for its head, Mecca for its heart, Yemen for its rump, Syria and Maghrib for its thighs, and Egypt for its skull."

A city founded on the fear of God, as built by the Moslems under the Khalif 'Omar, and not inhabited, like the surrounding places, by fire-worshippers and other idolaters.

Therein meet the ships and the saddle-beasts, on account of its being equally accessible by roads traversed by travellers on land, and sea-routes frequented by voyagers. Similar meanings are conveyed by the meeting of the fish and the lizard, as the former lives exclusively in the water, which is avoided by the latter; by that of the camel-driver and the sailor, of the herdsman and the swimmer, while other juxtapositions point to the variety of trades pursued in a city of such importance.

The marvel of the tide that swells and the ebb that sinks, the fluctuations of the Indian Ocean affecting the river up to Baṣra in a similar manner as the tide influences the Thames at London.

Your ascetic is the most devout of mankind, etc.—The ascetic here alluded to is Ḥasan Al-Baṣrî, who has been mentioned in Assembly XL., p. 247, above. *Your scholar* is meant for Abû 'Obaydeh, born A.H. 110, the same year in which Ḥasan Al-Baṣrî died, and deceased about A.H. 200, a great grammarian and the first who explained the *gharîbân*, or more recondite expressions in the Koran and the Traditions. *He who originated and laid down the doctrine of grammar* is Abû 'l-Aswad Ẓâlim ibn 'Amr, who was slain in the battle of Ṣiffîn, and *he who discovered the measures of poetry* is Khalîl, of whom also mention has been made in Assembly XL., p. 248, above.

The imitation of the ceremonies at 'Arafât . . . the morning bounty in the holy month.—Yauma 'arafata is the ninth day of the month *Ẓû 'l-ḥijjah*, on which the pilgrims congregate and pray on Mount 'Arafât, and it became the custom of Mohammedans living in towns

distant from Mecca to imitate on that day the ceremonies performed on this occasion by processions and devotions outside their gates, a practice which was called *ta'rîf*, and is tersely explained by the commentators as "a celebration of the day of 'Arafah without Mount 'Arafât." It was instigated at Baṣra by Mohammed's cousin, 'Abdallah Ibn 'Abbâs (for whom see vol. i., p. 332), and the observance soon spread to other Moslem communities. *Tashîr*, from *saḥar*, the dawn before sunrise, is another custom introduced by the inhabitants of Baṣra, which consisted in holding a market for the supply of food in the early mornings during the month of Ramadân, where the poor were allowed to satisfy their wants on their asking for leave.

But as for me, he who knows me—well, I am such, i.e., as he has learnt to know me from long acquaintance, meant, in connection with the clause following, as a hint to Al Ḥârith not to betray him, which would be a mean action under the present circumstances.

The hoofs of camels and their humps.—This may be taken literally, meaning the camels that have carried me on my numerous journeys, or figuratively, as a note in my MS. explains, in the sense of "people high and low."

How many a flint I have made to split by my spells, lit., on how many a stone I have practised magic until it split asunder, *i.e.*, how many a miser I have wheedled into liberality.

And the hair of my temple raven-black, in Arabic *wa 'l faudu ghirbîbun.*—The commentators agree that the meaning of the word *ghirbîb* is "intensely black," but while some derive it from *ghurâb*, raven or crow, others trace it to the infinitive of the 4th from *ighrâb*, being far removed, as a black which surpasses in blackness everything else, and consider the name of the raven to be a derivative of the same verbal noun, either on account of his colour, or of his living at a distance from human habitations. In the Koran the term occurs in a corroborated form, which by Zamakhshari is explained with great subtilty and described as a highly energetic mode of expression, in the passage xxxv. 25: "Seest thou not that God sendeth down water from the Heaven, and that by it We cause the upgrowth of fruits of varied hues, and that on the mountains are tracks of varied hues, white and red, and others are of *a raven black*." The last two words of Rodwell's translation are in the original

gharâbîbu sûdun, literally, ravenish (or exceedingly) black, and the peculiarity of the idiom as a corroborative consists in the idea being twice expressed, first in an implied form (*gharâbhîbu*, pl. of *ghirbîb*) and then in reality (*sûdun*). Similarly the poet Nâbighah says:

"By Him who protects *the seekers of refuge, the birds*, whom the pilgrims to Mecca pass between Ghîl and Sanad,"

where the birds who first were intimated by the expression "seekers of refuge" are subsequently explicitly named by way of explanation and corroborative emphasis.

That on every day a glance from Allah, be He exalted, falls upon you, i.e., a glance of compassion and benevolence. A tradition attributes to Mohammed the prophetic saying: "On every day God Almighty vouchsafes two glances, one upon the people of the earth to the East and West, the other upon the people of Basra."

For He is lofty in dignity, etc., allusion to Koran, xl. 15: "Of exalted grade," and xlii. 24: "He it is who accepteth repentance from His servants, and forgiveth their sins and knoweth your actions."

Would that I had been afore forgotten, in Arabic *nisyan*, or *nasyan*, a thing forgotten that on account of its contemptibleness does not occur to the mind, a word borrowed from the Koran, xix. 23: "And the throes came upon her (Mary) at the trunk of a palm. She said: Oh would that I had died ere this, and been a thing forgotten, forgotten quite (*nasyan mansîyan*)."

To whom their hearts incline, in Arabic *ṣaghat qulûbuhum ilai-hi*. The verb *ṣaghw*, like its synonym *mail*, may have the meaning of inclining, tending towards, or of declining, deviating from, according to the preposition by which it governs. Here this preposition is *ilá*, to, but the same verb occurs in the opposite sense, Koran, lxvi. 4: "If ye both be turned to God in penitence, for now have your hearts gone astray (*ṣaghat qulûbu-kumá*)," where *'an-hu*, from him, is to be supplied, so that the literal translation would be "your hearts have declined or deviated from him."

Is there any rare news?—In the original: *hal min mugharribati khabarin*, lit., "is there any astounding matter of a report," a proverbial expression (Ar. Prov., ii. 883), as frequently employed as the favourite Yorkshire phrase "Aught fresh?" Instead of the

usual reply, "Nought" (to be pronounced "noute") with which the latter meets, here the answer is, "*News rarer than the 'Anḳâ*," alluding to the fabulous bird (Ar. Prov., i. 356) so frequently mentioned in Oriental poetry, "*and more marvellous than the sight of Zarḳâ*," proverbial for sharpness of sight (Ar. Prov., i. 192, 401; ii. 68).

Who had donned the wool-cloth (*ṣûf*), *i.e.*, who had become an ascetic or Sufî.

Amongst those whose token is the trace of prostration in their faces, taken from Koran, xlviii. 29: "Thou mayst see them bowing down, prostrating themselves, imploring favours from God and His good pleasure in them. *Their tokens are on their faces, the traces of their prostrations.*"

And fond farewells to farer fair, lit., and (memories) of the traveller bidden (or bidding) farewell. In this translation I take the word *zâ'in*, which by the Commentators is simply rendered with *musâfir*, traveller, although grammatically a masculine, as logically a feminine, similar to *ḥâmil*, a pregnant female, or *ḥâ'iz*, a menstruous woman, because the verb *za'n* means more particularly travelling in a *za'înah*, litter, an essentially feminine mode of locomotion, from which a woman travelling in a litter is herself called *za'înah*. This appears also to be the opinion of the editors of the second edition of De Sacy, who say: "This first verse seems to refer to the usual beginnings of Ḳaṣîdehs, in which the places now desolate and forsaken are celebrated, that had formerly been inhabited by a mistress." Readers who prefer the letter to the spirit are at liberty to substitute "faring friend" instead of "farer fair."

And reckless of His tardy wrath, in the original *aminta makra-hu*, lit., thou held'st thyself secure against His scheme or stratagem, meaning the punishment He has planned for thee. This is an allusion to Koran, vii. 97: "Did they then think themselves *secure from the deep counsel of God?* But none think themselves secure from the deep counsel of God, save those who perish."

How often . . . wast thou neglecting carelessly the duties of His covenant, lit., didst thou not observe that which is incumbent of His injunction to be followed, again alluding to Koran, xxxvi. 60: 'Did I not *enjoin on you*, O sons of Adam, Worship not Satan, for that he is your declared foe?"

That goal of pilgrims of long syne, of countless pilgrims yet to come.—Compare with this the following lines of a poet:

"Life is a sleep, and death the awakening thereof, and man between them a phantom that fares at night;
Fulfil then your needs hastily, for your existence is but a journey amongst journeys."

Possessed of all the riches of a Tobba' king.—Tobba' is the name of three kings of Yemen, the first of whom, called Shamar, is said to have conquered China and devastated Samarcand; the second, As'ad, slaughtered, according to popular tradition, six thousand camels at the holy house, and provided it with a door of gold; while the third, Abû Ḥassân, is not credited with any particular feat of his own, but seems to have contented himself with the glory of his predecessors (comp. Caussin de Perceval's Esai, i. 61 and following, and Reinaud's Introduction to his "Géographie d'Abulféda," p. 355).

Separated hither and thither, in Arabic *tafarraqû shaghara baghara*, a proverbial expression for dispersing in all directions, for which see Ar. Prov., i. 502.

And wept as not Jacob wept, allusion to Koran, xii. 84: "And he turned away from them and said, Oh! how I am grieved for Joseph! and his eyes became white with grief, for he bore a silent sorrow."

If thou makest a resolution, put thy trust in Allah, quotation from Koran, iii. 153: "Therefore forgive them and ask for pardon for them, and consult them in the affair of war, and when thou *art resolved, then put thou thy trust in God;* Verily God loveth those who trust in Him."

Keep death in view, lit., make death the target of thy eye, taken from the proverb *ja'altu-hu naṣba 'ainâya*, I have made him or it the target of both my eyes. For *naṣb* most Arabs say *nuṣb*, a *fu'l* with the meaning of *maf'ûl*, like *ukl*, food, for *ma'kûl*, that which is eaten, so that *nuṣb* would stand for *manṣûb*, that which is set up, hence a butt or target.

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Yemen, i. 10, 64, 108, 131, 263, 279, 280, 288, 299, 320, 351, 352, 369, 372, 381, 387, 390, 404, 417, 422, 425, 426, 441, 444, 445, 448, 466, 479, 527, 530, 537; ii. 62, 83, 113, 119, 178, 199, 211, 224, 238, 247, 256 306, 310

APPENDIX B (SEE PREFACE, P. X).

THIS appendix shows the names of people, places, and things as spelt by Mr. Chenery in 1867, compared with the transliteration of the present day by Dr. Steingass, who prefaces the subjoined list with the following explanatory remarks:

"The system of transliteration observed by me is based on two distinctive principles: Firstly, to represent, to the exclusion of every element of doubt, the written Arabic character, which, excepting some slight variations in the shape of the letters, has not altered ever since the Koran was first committed to writing; secondly, to select the representative symbols so as to make them fit in with the transliteration of other Oriental languages in England, particularly with that of the diverse idioms of India, partly derived from Sanscrit.

"The former of these principles applies especially to the vowels, and aims at the uniform rendering of the three unvariable *signs* for the elementary vowels Fatḥah ('a'), Kasrah ('i'), and Ẓammah ('u'), taken by themselves and in connection with the weak consonants Yâ ('y') and Wâw ('w'), irrespectively of their *sounds*, or the way in which they are pronounced. Pronunciation has changed, and probably will go on changing, in different times and places, and is therefore in all languages, as English illustrates in the most striking manner, only to be acquired by oral instruction. When it is made the basis of transliteration, it leads unavoidably to inconsistencies. To begin, for instance, with the beginning: The name of the first letter 'Alif,' which, with the original sound of its initial, has, thanks to Greek, survived until this day in the first syllable of the English word 'alphabet,' is spelt by Mr. Chenery 'Elif,' because it is thus pronounced by the modern Arabs. But for the same reason he should

write 'El Ḥârith' instead of 'Al Ḥârith,' for 'El' is the pronunciation now given by most Arabs to the article, and adopted, *e.g.*, in Professor Wright's Arabic Grammar. Again, if Mr. Chenery spells 'Moslem' instead of 'Muslim,' he may with equal right transliterate 'Ḥâreth' instead of 'Ḥârith,' the last syllable of either word having Kasrah for its vowel. Another point of divergence between the two systems refers to Fatḥah, followed by a quiescent Wâw or Yâ, in which case the Sukûn over the weak consonants indicates that their consonantal character submerges in their cognate vowel element, which forms with the preceding Fatḥah the diphthongs corresponding to the Greek *αυ* and *αι*, in Roman letters 'au' and 'ai.' I therefore would have written 'Zaurâ' for Chenery's 'Zowrâ,' and 'Zaid' for his 'Zayd' (why not 'Zeyd' in analogy with 'Zowra'?).

"With regard to the second principle concerning the consonants, I substitute the symbols 'Ẓ,' 'T̤,' and 'Ẕ' respectively, for Mr. Chenery's 'Ḍ,' 'Ṭ,' and 'Ẓ,' or in other words, I would spell 'Tumâẓir' for his 'Tumâḍir,' 'T̤ûr' for his 'Ṭûr,' 'Ẓâhir' for his 'Ẓâhir,' etc. Thus the first two of his letters with a single dot underneath, 'Ḍ' and 'Ṭ,' remain available for the transliteration of cognate letters in some of the Indian languages. 'Ẕ' for his 'Ẓ' recommends itself as a correlative of 'T̤,' both consonants represented thereby having in Arabic similar outlines and a strong organic affinity, and 'Ẓ' for 'Ḍ' is justified by the relation of the transcribed letter to that designated by Chenery and myself by 'Ṣ,' the Arabic character of which has the same shape, and from whose peculiar sibilant sound it inclines towards 'Z.'

"Chenery's 'Th' corresponds to my 'S̲,' and when underlined, as in 'Jathîmeh,' to my 'Z̲,' the object of which substitutions is to avoid as much as possible the use of compound letters in the transliteration. If in this respect the time-honoured 'Gh' and 'Kh' are preserved, they should be underlined, in order to indicate that they are not to be pronounced separately, but as a single sound—the 'K̲h,' for instance, somewhat like the Scotch 'ch' in 'loch.' This is of prosodic importance when the letters occur in the middle of a word; for if in the transliteration of the Arabic 'lug̲hah,' for instance, the constituent parts of the compound character were kept separate in pronunciation as in the English word 'loghouse,' it would,

according to the laws of Arabic prosody, form a spondee, while in reality it is an iambus.

"There is one point more to consider in every system of transliteration, namely, the avoidance of diacritical signs altogether as far as feasible. This applies to the letters Kâf and Ḳaf (Qâf). Their distinction by means of a dot below the second one has much in its favour, but, on the other hand, both occur so frequently in Arabic, that the accidental breaking off of the dot in type or its omission by oversight may cause numerous mistakes. In France and England, therefore, the second letter was represented by 'C,' of which the English dictionary word 'cadi' is a remnant; but the different pronunciation of 'C' before 'E' and 'I' from that before other vowels led to its abandonment. The same objection, however, does not exist against my transcribing the guttural in question by 'Q,' and this practice gains more and more in extension.

"After an attentive perusal of the above remarks, and by aid of the annexed alphabetical list, the student of Arabic will have no difficulty to retransliterate, according to my system, any of the names of persons, places, and objects which the editor has taken great pains in altering from the original spelling of vol. ii. into that of vol. i.:

CHENERY.	STEINGASS.
Abû Zayd.	Abû Zaid.
'Âyisheh.	'Âyishah.
Bâḳil.	Bâqil.
Baydâwî.	Baiẓâwî.
Ḍabbah.*	Ẓabbah.
Elif.	Alif.
Farḍ.	Farẓ.
Fâṭimeh.	Fâṭimah.
Ghaḍa.	Ghaẓá.
Ḥârith.	Ḥâriṣ.
Ibn Al Moḳaffa'.	Ibn al-Muqaffa'.

* This and the last name in the list do not occur in the second volume, but they have been inserted to show at a glance, in the natural order of the alphabet, how the initial letters of both are transliterated by Mr. Chenery and Dr. Steingass respectively.

CHENERY.	STEINGASS.
Jathîmeh.	Jazîmah.
Kadi.	Qâzî.
Ḳa'ḳâ'.	Qa'qâ'.
Khalîl.	Khalîl.
Ḳâmûs.	Qâmûs.
Ḳaṭa.	Qaṭa'.
Laḳab.	Laqab.
Mo'allaḳah.	Mu'allaqah.
Mokhâriḳ.	Mukhâriq.
Nâbigheh.	Nâbighah.
'Okâẓ.	'Ukâẓ.
'Othrah.	Uzrah.
Ramaḍân.	Ramaẓân.
Shaykh.	Shaikh.
Ṭaybeh.	Ṭaibah.
Tharid.	Ṣarîd.
Thû 'l Ḥijjah.	Ẓû 'l-ḥijjah.
Welîd.	Walîd.
Yemâmeh.	Yamâmah.
Ẓarîfeh.	Ẓarifah.

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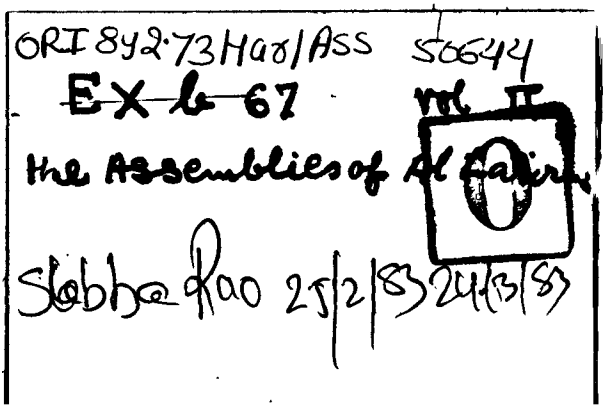

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